

A HOLY ALPHABET

FOR

SION'S SCHOLARS;

FVLL OF SPIRITVAL

INSTRVCTIONS, AND HEAVEN-

ly Consolations, to direct and encourage

them in their Progresse towards the

New IERUSALEM:

Delivered, by way of Commentary vpon the
whole 119. Psalme.

By WILLIAM COVPER, Minister of Gods
Word, and B. of Galloway.

PROV. 1. 5.

A wise man shall heare and increase in knowledge: and a man of vnderstanding, shall attaine vnto wise counsels.

Amb in Psal. 119. NVN.

Intelligimus ideo per litteras Heb. eorum T'sa'mum hunc esse digestum, vt homo nosset tanquam puerulus ab infantia per litterarum elementa formatus, qui usque ad pueritiam assuevit, vtq. ad maturitatem virtutis exerceat.

LONDON.

Printed by H. Lownes, for John Budge; and are to be
solde at his Shop at the great South-doore of Pauls,
and Briannes Burse. 1613.

YIOH A
T





TO THE RIGHT HO-
NOVRABLE, DAVID, LORD OF
SCONE, ONE OF HIS MAIE-
sties most Honorable Priuy Coun-
cell in this Kingdome.



*Y^e Lord; when I dedicated to the
Earle of Dunbar, of good memo-
ry, my Treatise of the Anatomy
of a Christian, I was then of
purpose to haue presented to your
L. this Holy Alphabet for Si-
ons Scholars; but could not per-
fit it till now. Y^e liued together in
his Maiesties most honourable*

*seruice, like a paire of faithfull friends; louing and plea-
sant in your liues, and shall not be diuided in your deatbs
for me. As my other Treatise went forth for a witnesse of
my fauour without flattery toward him (for the Dedicato-
rse Epistle was printed after his death) so will I that this
stand as a testimonie of my loue toward your L. partly for
that which yee are, and partly for that which I hope yee
shall be: Ille enim veraciter amat amicum, qui Deum
amat in amico; aut quia est in illo, aut vt sit in illo. For
he doth truly loue his friend, who loueth God in his friend:
that is, eyther for the good which is in him; or else, that the
good which he wants may be in him.*

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There are many in this age, with whom Satan hath covenanted, as Nahash the Ammonite would haue done with the Israelites of Labish Gilead, upon this condition, That he put out their right eyes. These men haue an eye to see, and atong to speake of that, which is euill in another; but none to see that which is good: compared properly by Nazianzen, to venomous flies; who passing by the part that is whole, light vpon that which is sore, and make it worse then they found it. For mine owne part, I neuer mind to be one of these. If I should praise you for the good which ye want, I knowe I should neyther please you nor profite you; your vnderstanding being more solid, then that shadowes in stead of substance, can content you: neyther yet also, on the other hand, will I so looke vnto that, which ye want, that I passe by the good which ye haue; under hope also that this shall make you better.

There are none who knowe your L. but haue marked an affection toward Religion so induerterible, that no man contrary minded, durst ener attempt to alter it: which in this declining age deserues no small commendation. A heart in like maner toward execution of iustice, so inflexible, that ye haue preferred the lawe to the loue of men, who otherway haue bin most deere vnto you: for the which how soeuer yee haue bene mislikened of many; yet haue you proued a profitable seruant to your Master in most difficill times: for By iustice the Throne is established. Your naturall iudgement in discerning betweene right and wrong, may iustly be admired: specially sith your education hath not been by precepts of artes, in the Academie; but by practise of them, in the Palace: whereunto yee could also hardly haue attained, if yee had not learned vnder such a King, as is not onely a pattern of vertue himselfe; but a solid Theolog and Philosopher, euer discussing to his Discipules of that which is good and euill, both in Religion, manners, and policie.

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But my Lord; howsoever these be good things, and worthy commendation, yet haue they need to be strengthened with better: for all gifts, were they neuer so excellent, if they be not crowned with godlinesse, may well increase conuiction; but can render no consolation in the day of trouble. This is it therefore which now I haue to recommend vnto your L. that yee growe in knowledge and in the grace of our Lorde Iesus Christ: wherunto, beside these common reasons that should stirre vp euery Christian, there are three which more particularly prouoke you vnto it.

The first is, that GOD by your first generation hath brought you forth a man of honour in this earth: for in regard of naturall descent, your honourable Father, the Lorde of Baluaird, was a brother of the Earle of Tullibardin; whose house is as a noble stocke, from which hath sprung out, like branches, exceeding many honourable Families, all of the name of Murray, and hath continued in this Lande these fiftene hundred yeares.

Your Mother, a Grahame, daughter of the right Noble Earle of Montrose; whose house hath continued with honour since the beginning of this Kingdome.

Your Mothers mother, a Keith, daughter to the right noble Earle Marthell; whose House and Family being long before honourable in this Kingdome, was sixe hundred years agoe decorated with the Office of the Marshallship of Scotland. for their vertue and valour in batteil; wherein they continue vnto this day among the chiefeſt Peeres of the Realme. Your Fathers Mother, a Lyndsay, daughter to the right noble Lord, the Lord Lyndsay; whose House not inferiour to many in honour, may about many most iuſtly be commended for their earnest zeale, and sincere affection toward the advancement of true Religion.

All these should greatly increase your care, that ye be no

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found lesse honourable in Christ, then ye are in this world: For this world properly is compared to a Stage-play, wherein oftentimes Nobles are clad in beggars garments, and the beggar takes on the habite of a King; but when the guise is ended, and the maskes remoued, then euery one appeares to be that which he is: and the man of base estate was not so much comforted with his temporall representation of an honourable man, as he is now grieved to see hee was but honourable in sport and shew, not in effect. Yet many such are there in the world, who goe in the state of honourable men, but shall be found in the end vessels of dishonour. To be honourable in both, is rare; yet such as may be obteyned by godlinesse: for godlinesse hath the promise both of this life, and of the life to come.

The second reason; Ye haue serued his Maiestie, these eight and thirtie yeares: not as a Domestique onely; but as a Counsellor and Officer of estate also: and that with so constant an affection, that ye haue not spared to incurre the displeasure and malecontentment of any whatsoeuer; so be it, ye might procure pleasure and contentment to your Master. My Lord; as yee haue learned to serue most faithfully a King on earth, and for good seruice haue receiued the recompence of his Princely liberality: so thinke with your selfe how greatly ye shall be conuinc'd, if ye doe not learne to serue the King of heauen; whose wage to his seruants doth as farre exceed any thing yee haue, as the heauens are aboue the earth.

The third is; Ye are now stricken in yeares, your Almond tree is flourish'd: these fiftie and eight yeares hath God spared you, and not taken you away in your ignorances and sinnes, as he hath done many others; both at your right hand, and at the left. My Lord; the patience of God is called long, but his mercy everlasting: the vse of his mercy toward his owne, is to beare with them, till they be deliuered into the hands of his mercie: then are they out of all dan-

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ger, for his mercy endures for ever: and whom once he receiveth, he neuer casts away again. But wo is to the wicked: for they abuse Gods patience, to fulfill the measure of their iniquity; heaping up wrath to themselves by the multiplication of sinnes, as it were in a treasure against the day of wrath. Thus as the Fish of Iorden goe sprinkling and playing in the streame thereof, till at length they fall into the Loch or salt Sea of Sodom, where they die: so are all the wicked, abusing Gods patience, carried on by their deceitfull pleasures of sin, to a miserable end. For where in their young yeares they will not repent, in their olde age custome of sinne so confirmes them in euill, that they cannot repent; no more then a Leopard can change his spots, or a Blacke Moore his colour. Of this your L. may perceiue that God his long patience, whereby he spares a man, is not a blessing, if mercy to pardon sins past, and grace to renue for the time to come, doe not follow it: yea, rather, *quo diutius expectat districtius iudicabit*; the longer he tarie and spare, the sharper will he strike when he comes. Let this waken in your L. a care to redeme the time, and a resolution to sacrifice the residue of your few yeares vnto the Lord your God.

For which cause it shall not be unprofitable your L. remember these counsels: first, that ye examine diligently your by-gon life; No man knowes the things of a man, but the spirit of a man: this will tell you more of your selfe, then all the world can tell you. In this examination spare not your selfe, if you would haue God to spare you: iudge your selfe, accuse your selfe, correct your selfe, and GOD shall not iudge you. Remember when yee come to iudgement, there will be none to stand against you, if it be not your owne sinnes: so long therefore as you haue time, fall vpon them, fight with them, and doe all that ye can to vnder them.

Where, if your L. would know how is it that a man may

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undo the euill which he hath done; The answer is, that two manner of waies ye may doe it: first, if with good Ezechia ye recount your by-gon sinnes in the bitternesse of your heart, mourning for them euery when ye thinke vpon them, and with the eyes of faith looke to him, who being righteous, died for our sinnes: sending vp strong supplications to God, that by the merit of Christs death your sinnes may be buried in the graue, and haue neuer place to stand against you in iudgement. If they be such as may be mended by restitution, faile not to do it, after the manner of good Zachaeus: if they be not of that nature, mend them by doing the contrarie good. This is that holie reuenge which the Apostle commends as a notable effect of repentance, That we should be reuenged of our by-gon euils, by doing the good which we know is most contrarie vnto them.

This being done for annulling of your by-gon sinnes, let your next care be to rellisie your life for the time to come. Salomon saies, The end of a thing is better then the beginning thereof. His meaning is of good things: for euill men waxe worse and worse; but an elect man by grace makes his latter end better then his beginning; and they who are planted in the Courts of the Lords house, flourish and bring forth fruit, euery in their olde daies.

And here againe I recommend to your L. a threefold dutie. First, remember how manie are the obligations vnder which ye stand bound to the Lord your God: thinke vpon that question of godlie Dauid; What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me? Take an answer for it, out of these vverds of Salomon; My sonne giue me thine heart. Euery morning offer vnto the Lord Primittias cordis, & oris tui; the first fruits of your heart and mouth: thinke vpon nothing before yee thinke on him; speake of nothing till first yee speake vnto him; be seruent and continuall in prayer. Si non semper precamur, semper debemus habere paratum precantis affectum; if

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we be not alway praying, we should alway haue reade a heart disposed to pray. The vessels of mercy should smell of mercie; and the Temples of God should neuer want the sacrifices of God: giue to the Lord both the thanks, and the seruice of all the good ye haue receiued from him. Many giue him verball thanks for his benefites, acknowledging themselves debtors to him for the good which they haue; who will not serue him with his owne benefites. Let these men know, that their thanks are not acceptable to him.

The second point of your care, I would haue entended to the poore and needy: as ye haue receiued mercy from God, or looke to get it, shew mercy for Gods sake to such as are vnder you. Salomon saith, The mercies of the wicked are crueltie; but the mercies of a righteous man extend euen toward his beast: how much more then will he be mercifull to his Christian brother? Remember what comfort Iob found in the day of his trouble, arising from this, That he restrained not the poore of their desire, and caused not the eyes of the widdow to faile: that he did not eate his morsels alone, but the fatherlesse eat thereof: that he saw none perish for want of clothing, nor suffered the poore to be without a couering: that the loynes of the poore blessed him, because hee was warmed with the fleece of his sheepe. It is a great grace, where a man, not onely sets his owne heart to praise God; but hyreth the heart and tongue of others to praise God with him, and for him: therefore To do good and to distribute forget not, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

And with these, thinke it a peece of your honour to honor the seruants of the Lord. Beautifull, saith Elay, are the feet of those, who bring the glad tidings of peace: If their feet be beautifull, what should their face be? Look not to their weaknesse; but for their Master and their message sake, esteeme them alwayes worthy to be welcomed. And sith they pray vnto God for your L. be loth to re-

Iob 31.

Heb. 13.

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use them in their reasonable requests to you, remembering that reason which Ambrose used to Theodose the Emperour: Si dignus non sum qui à te audiar, nec etiam dignus qui pro te à deo exaudiar; If I be not worthy that I should be heard of thee when I speake vnto thee, farre lesse am I worthy that I should be heard of God, when I speake to him for thee.

The third is, that ye haue a continuall care of your selfe. Nature can teach you to care for those things which are yours; but it is grace must leaue you to care for your selfe. Satan is a restless tempter; but yet so subtil, that he can frame his temptations according to the ages and states of men: he tempts not children as he doth young men; neyther tempts hee young men as hee doth the aged; neyther tempts he the aged as he doth any of the other two. Hee tempts children with folly, and playes with them, as the Proverb is, at the belly blinde; seeking no more of that age, but that it be passed ouer with foolish and frivolous things. Young men againe he tempts to wickednesse, many wayes, by the fury of their inordinate concupiscence: these are called by the Apostle, The noysome lusts of youth. Aged men most commonly he tempts them with couetousnesse, and excessive cares of the world. Omnia in homine cum senescunt vitia, sola iuuenescit auaritia: When all other sinnes waxe olde and feeble in a man, onely couetousnesse waxeth young, and increaseth her strength. And who can tell how miserable that man is, who in his childhood lined like a foole, in his youth was filthy, in his olde age a worldling; vnlesse God by grace bring him out of that fearfull bondage?

I speake not this as if I forbade the vse of this world, or did condemne all care thereof, or those lawfull pleasures your L. takes in building, planting, or other such civil vertues, wherein ye stand vnto all that are about you a patiente of policy: but to warne you, that ye walke circumspectly:

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pettly, vsing this world as if ye vsed it not. What-euer your actions be about it, set your affections vpon better things; knowing, as saith the Apostle, that the shape and figure of this world goes away. It is wisdom to forsake it against our will: to leaue it euen when we do possesse it. Abraham liued not so long as did many of his fathers; yet when he died, it is said of him that he died full of dayes, because he desired none. Sith ye know ye must remoue, be prepared like Israel in Egypt, with their loines girded, and their staves in their handes, ready to march forward from Egypt to Canaan. Be content with the dayes ye haue gotten: liue so, as not needing any more; but vse euery day, as if it were your last day: after which, if God giue you another, take it as a super-plus, and be thankfull to him for it.

For all these causes which I haue premitted, and that the seed of godlinesse, which these many yeares I haue known in you, breeding spirituall remorse with teares, and godly holy desires, may at length be cherished and brought forward, both to the flourishing and further fructifying; I haue here presented to your L. these Meditations, which I ordinarily deliuered to my people, in time of their euening Prayers; and haue intuned it, A holy Alphabet, or A.B.C. of godlinesse: to plaine in it selfe, that children may vnderstand it; and yet so plentifull in heavenly instruction, that the most wise, godly, and auncient may euery day learne something by it.

Accept it, reade it, practise it, right Honourable: steppe forward in the good course which now ye haue happily begun; and these good conclusions, which I know ye haue intuned with your selfe, may breake forth into actions; that so the world may see by the fruit, that the tree grows euert longer the better. Such of your waies and workers, as your L. knowes haue bene iustly condemned of others, studie now to amend them; that all reasonable men may haue satis-

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*satisfaction; and such as before misliked you for your evil,
may now thanke God for your good; and you, by wel-doing
bringing forth fruits worthy of amendment of life, may
make sure to your selfe your calling and election.*

*Which mercie the Lord more and more
confirme towards you for Christi:
sake. Amen.*

Your L. in Christ Iesus,

William Cowper,

B. of Galloway.



A HOLY ALPHABET for Sions Scholars.

My helpe is in the Name of the Lord.



Here is no way, by which a man may learne, but by the same God doth teach him: by precepts, he instructs; by requests, he exhorts; by promises, hee allures; by threatnings, he terrifies: and therefore hath he sent his seruants, of sundry qualities, according to their severall gifts, vnto vs; some like *Moses*, to teach vs; some like *Esay*, to comfort vs; some like *Jeremie*, mourning to vs; some like *Dauid*, singing to vs. If when they teach, we learne not; if when they mourne, we lament not; if when they pipe, we dance not: yea, if the sweetest songs of the sweet Singer of Israel (*Quis nouit Orpheus est*) delight vs not, to ralle vp our affections to the Lord; are we not inexcusable?

A

By

So many waies
doth God
teach man, that
man is inexcusable if he learn
not.

Math. 11. 17.

Eulogm.

Gods courle
in dealing with
man, contrary
to Sathans.

Esa. 54.

A commendation
of the
booke of the
Psalmes.
Amb.

Dauid both
the heart, and
the tongue, and
the pen of
the great King.

By the deceit of vaine pleasure, Sathan steales the heart of man from God: and the Lord most artificially by the sweetnesse of true pleasure, allures him home againe; *What could the Lord haue done any more vnto vs, that he hath not done?* He propones most profitable things for vs in his word: and to make them the more welcome, he seasons them with pleasures. *Nam quod gratum est, incundius recipitur, & constantius retinetur.*

Vnto this vse serues the whole booke of the Psalmes, which is *Commune quoddam medicina promptuarium*; but in speciall this Psalmie, which, in the iudgement of *Ambrose*, exceeds the rest, as farre as the light of the Sunne excels the light of the Moone. It was written by one of the Saints of God, but in so maruellous a manner, that the wordes therof conuene and agree vnto all; *Quod huius operis proprium est.* So that it is, *Velut penus doctrina publicum, vnicuique apta & conuenientia distribuens*; and therefore should be in no lesse account with those, who loue the spirituall life, then is the vse of the Sunne, the ayre and the fire, for the entertainment of this naturall life.

The Author of this Psalmie, was most properly called by *Euthymius*, *Primi regis & cor, & lingua, & calamus*: for he receiued this testimony from the heauenly Oracle, That hee was a man after Gods heart. Now because no greater ioy can come to the children of God, then to know

know that God esteemes of them, as he esteemed of *Dauid*, that they are also men after the heart of God; let them here learne a ready way whereby they may know it. It was promised, that vnder the Kingdome of Christ, the meanest or least should be like vnto *Dauid*. If therefore by grace thou be partaker of *Dauids* disposition, recorded to thee in this Psalm, thou maist be out of doubt thou art also partaker of his approbation: for the Lord is no acceptor of persons; what he approues in one, he will also approue in another.

This is it which *Pontius* the Deacon records of *Cyprian*, that when euer he heard or read any person commended in the Booke of God, hee warned vs, to make diligent inquisition of their actions, for which they were commended: as namely, when we heare, said he, that *Iob* receiued this praise from God, *that he was an vpright and iust man, one that feared God, and eschued euill, and how none was like him on the earth*, let vs turne ouer to the 31. chapter; where we haue a short compend of his life: and let vs endeavour to order our life as he did his. *Ut dum & nos paria facimus, simile in nos Dei testimonium prouocemus.* We need not then goe vpto the counsell of God, to enquire there, whether or not we be beloued of him; let vs come downe to our selues, *Make sure our calling and election by wel doing*: let vs trie our selues by this disposition, which here is in *Dauid*; where we finde a confor-

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mity:

If we be partakers of *Dauids* disposition, we shall also be partakers of his approbation.



A notable sentence of *Cyprian* to this purpose.

Iob 1. 1. 8.

Pontius.

We should make these vertues for which God hath commended his seruants.

mitie, let vs giue thanks for the beginnings of Gods grace in vs; where not, let vs praise to amend: being assured, vnlesse wee follow *Dauid* in the practise of piety, we cannot be partakers of his praise, which hee receiued from God.

In euery verse of this Psalm, except one, *Dauid* makes mention of Gods word. *Vatabius.*

Now among many points of godlinesse manifest in him, there is one here throughout the whole Psalm, more euident then the rest; and that is his feruent affection toward the word of God: for in euery verse, except one onely, to wit, the 122. he makes mention of the word of God, vnder some of these names, *Lawe, Statutes, Precepts, Testimonies, Commandements, Word, Promises, Wayes, Iudgements, Name, Righteousnesse, Truth*: the reason hereof is, because in euery state of life he found light, life, & comfort in the word of God; and therefore was his affection inflamed toward it. Euen as children, new borne by the instinct of nature, haue an appetite to milk for conseruation of their life: so the children of God, once regenerate by the instinct of grace, haue a spirituall appetite to the word of God: according to that of *Saint Peter*; *As new borne babes desire the sincere milke of the word, that yet may growe thereby.* Neyther is it possible that any man can esteeme of that worde as a foode for their nourishment, but they to whom first it hath beene a seede of their newe birth: and the onely cause, why the cold professors of this

Such as are regenerate by the word, liue by it, as by the food of their soules.

this age esteemes it not as a food, for which they hunger and thirst, but rather be weary of it more then Israel was of Manna; is, that it was neuer vnto them a liuely seed of their new birth: and so sith they haue neyther gotten life nor light by it, what maruell is it, they haue no delight in it?

As to the order of this Psalm, it is diuided into two and twenty Sections; every Section hath in it eight Verses, and every Verse beginnes in the Hebrew, with that letter, wherewith the Section is intituled: as, all the Verses of the first Section begin with *Aleph*; the Verses of the second with *Beth*, and so forward, according to the Hebrew *Alphabet*: for which wee may call this Psalm an *A.B.C.* of godlinesse. Another method of this Psalm can we not lay, saue that euery Verse contains in it, cyther a praise of Gods word, from some excellent quality of it; or a protestation of *Dauid* his vnfayned affection toward it; or else a prayer for grace, to conforme himselfe vnto it: for vnto one of these three, *Prayses*, *Prayers*, or *Protestations*, may all the Verses of this Psalm be reduced. And so we enter into it.

Others cannot account of it.



The order and diuision of this Psalm.



A L E P H.

V E R S. 1. *Blessed are these that are upright in their way, and walke in the Lawe of the Lord.*

The felicity of
man stands in a
conformity
with God.
*Basil. praefin
Psal.
Rom. 9. 5.*



His verse beginnes the Psalm, with a summary proposition of the blessed estate of all Gods children. Properly onely God is blessed: *God ouer all blessed for euer.* For this word *μακάριος*, signifies *immortalē*; ut sit *μακάριος* idē quod *μνῆριος*, id est *immortalis*, the letter α in both the syllables being turn'd into η for the pleasantnes of the sound: yet this name is also attributed to Gods children, who of his mercy are deliuered from death, and allotted vnto eternall life.

Fourē wayes is
mans felicity
described in
holy Scripture.

Ephes. 1. 3.

Psalm.

The blessednesse of man is foure manner of wayes described in holy Scripture: First, from the originall thereof, and fountaine from which it flowes; and that is our election: so the Apostle, when he blesses the Lord, who hath blessed vs with all spirituall blessings in Christ, he begins at this; *As he hath chosen vs.* Secondly, from the beginning thereof in vs; and that is our calling and iustification: *Blessed is the man whom thou*

thouchest and canst to come unto thee. Againe, Blessed is he whose wickednesse is forgiven, and whose sinne is couered. Thirdly, from the progresse thereof, which is made by sanctification; as, *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for righteousness*: and so here, *Blessed are they that are upright in way*. Lastly, from the perfection thereof; which shall be done in our finall glorification: vnto one of these may be referred euery sentence of holy Scripture, which makes mention of the happinesse and felicity of man.

Vpright in their way. We haue here first to see what is this Way; next, who are vpright in it. By the Way, vnderstand *Transitoriam hanc vitam*; and so indeed properly mans life on earth is called a Way: for in it man walkes from the wombe to the graue, by so continuall a motion, that there is no resting nor returning for him into it. But as a Ship, which goes right before the winde, makes haste (without staying) toward her hauening place, what-euer they doe that are in her; whether they cate, or they walke, or they rest, still the Bark that carries them goes on to her proposed end: so is it with man in the body, so soone as he comes out of the wombe, he is carried by a continuall course to the graue, whether he sleepe or walke; whether he haue minde of it or not, he is carried on in his course to his end, without intermission. And in this sense the life of euery man, whether good or euill, is a

Plal. 32. 1.

Matth. 5.

Enthyem.

Euery mans life is a Way, wherein without intermission, he walkes to the graue.

Basil.

Way Via vita est, hanc siquidem ab utero ad sepulchrum ambulamus omnes.

Psal. 125.

The different
courses of
good and euill
men in it.

But in this Way there is a great difference; for some are vpright in it: these are expounded to be such as walke in the way of the Lord; others againe *turne aside after their crooked wayes*. So that in the life of euery man there are two mori-
ons & courses: the one seene, w^{ch} is common to good and euill; the other more secret: the seene course, is the way of a man from the wombe to the graue; this is common, and as *Ioshua* calles it, *The way of all flesh*: this is so sensible, that all men perceiue it; the growing of a man from infancie to child-hood, from child-hood to young age, from young age to olde age: the other I said is more secret, wherein some by the crooked wayes of sinne, walke on vnto perdition; others by the way of holinesse to glorification. And this way I call more secret, because the course of wicked men is oft-times couered with hypocrisie: the course againe of godly men obscured by calumnie; both of them being esteemed among men, the one for good, the other for euill, that which indeed they are not.

For there is
one common
to them both,
which is seene:
one other pro-
per to each of
them, which is
secret.

A godly man
directs his
course by the
word.

Who walke in the Law of the Lord.] What be-
fore he spake obscurely, hee now deliuers more
plainly; namely, that they who walke in the Law
of the Lord, are vpright in way. The Lawe of
God is the rule of our life; that narrow rodde,
within the limits whereof, we should alway con-
taine

taine our selues, neyther declining to the right hand nor to the left, but euer proceeding, by this one rule, we should forget that which is behind, and endeavour our selues to that which is before: and truely, seeing by the lawe onely our actions will be iudged, wisdom requires that by the lawe onely our actions should be squared.

Phil 3. 13.

VER. 2. *Blessed are they who keepe his testimonies, and seeke him with their whole heart.*

EVery man desires to be blessed; euen they who had but the light of nature sought after it, but could not find it: here the Lord, who in the last day will pronounce some to be blessed, and some to be cursed, dooth now tell vs who they are. What can comfort them, to whom the Lord shall say, Depart from me ye cursed? Where away shall they goe, whom the Lord shall command to depart from him? And what greater ioy can com to a man, then to heare the Iudge of all saying vnto him, Come to me ye blessed? Oh that we were wise in time, to thinke of this, that so we might endeavour to becom such men, as to whom God, in his word, hath promised the blessing.

The doubling of the sentence, *Blessed blessed*, in the first verse and second, is to let vs see the certainty of the blessing belonging to the godly.

The

Mans felicity
stands in God
his approbation.

No malice of
Sathan, no
wrath of man,
can curse
where God
hath blessed.

Why Gods
word is called
the Testimony
of God.

Euery man
should take
heed what
Gods word te-
stifies to him.

Mich. 2. 7.



Aug.

The word of God is as true in it selfe, when it is once spoken, as when it is many times repeated: the repetition of it, is for confirmation of our weake faith. That which *Isaac* spake of *Jacob*, *I haue blessed him, and he shall be blessed*, is the most sure decree of God vpon all his children. Sathan would faine curse Israel, by the mouth of such as *Balaam* was: but he shall not be able to curse, because God hath blessed.

Keepe his Testimonie. The word of God is called his Testimony, not onely because it testifies his will, concerning his seruice; but also his fauour and good wil, concerning his own in Christ Iesus. If the word of God were no more but a Law, yet were we bound to obey it, because we are his creatures: but sith it is also a Testimony of his loue, wherein as a father he witnesseth his fauour toward his children; we are twise inexcusable, if most ioyfully we doe not embrace it.

And againe, sith the word is Gods Testimony, let vs take heed what it testifies vnto vs. *Achab* complained to *Iosaphat* on *Michaiiah*, that he neuer prophecied good things vnto him; but the blame was in *Achab* himselfe. *Are not my words, saith the Lord good vnto him that walkes vprightly?* If the word of the Lord witness no good vnto vs, it is because we are not good our selues: *Vtilis enim aduersarius est*, it is enemy to none, but such as are enemies to themselues. Let vs therefore take heed vnto it; for if the word condemne

vs,

vs, then our conscience, and the Lorde who is greater then them both will much more condemne vs: but if we repent of our sinnes, and continue in mourning, seeking mercy, & amend our liues, then shall the word bring vnto vs the glad tidings of peace; yea, not onely shall the word without, but the spirit also testifie to our conscience within, that our sinnes are forgien vs.

Now, as concerning the keeping of Gods Testimonies, the children of God do it in minde, in affection, in action. In mind, as *Mary* laid vp the words of the Angell in her heart, and *Dauid* laid vp the promises of God in his hart, that he should not sin against the Lord: in affection, they haue euer a godly desire, and a purpose to practise it; ioyfull when they doe the commandements of God; sorrowfull when they transgresse them: in action, they haue a begun obedience, which God at length shall perfite in them; for *The righteousness of the Law shall be fulfilled in vs also.*

And seeke him with their whole heart. The seeking of God so often recommended in holy Scripture, imports, that naturally men are strangers from God, diuided from him by sinne: for what needeth a man to seeke that which he hath not lost? This is man his most miserable condition by nature; he hath lost the familiar presence of his God: *For lo they that withdraw themselves from thee, shall perish; thou destroyest all them that*

How the children of God keepe his word in mind, affection, and action.

Rom. 8.

How necessary it is for vs to seeke the Lord.

Psal. 73. 27.

Ver. 18.

Miserable are
they who seeke
him not.With what af-
fection God
should be
sought.Chrysost. in mat.
hom. 24.

Euthym.



that goe a whooring from thee. What shall we do to remedie it? but practise that which there *Dauid* protests hee had concluded with himselfe; *As for me, it is good for me to draw neere vnto God*: we lost him by sinne, let vs seeke him by grace: we went a whooring from him by our iniquity, let vs returne vnto him by repentance: other-way, as he that will hide himselfe from the Sunne, empaires not the light thereof; hee may well shut himselfe in miserable darkenesse: so he that departs from the Lord, shall derogate nothing to his all-sufficient Maiesty; hee may well plunge himselfe in the bottomlesse pit of remedilesse misery.

But this euill, the losse of Gods familiar presence, is not felt by carnall men, so long as they enioy the comfort of his creatures: and therefore is it, that where they can seeke any other thing they want, with solicitude and care, eyther else they seeke him not at all; or then seeke him not as they should. As he that seekes a jewell which he hath lost, lookes still to see it, with so earnest an attention, that what euer other thing is in his way, he sees it not; casting all other things out of his minde, *Vnum illud intendit, quod solum requirit*: so is it with him that seekes the Lorde, *Mundana omnia pertransiens illum solum inquiri*; passing by all other things in the world, he makes inquisition for God only. And truly, if it be the Lord whom we seeke,

it

it will appeare by this; no other thing shall content vs, but still we will goe on, seeking him selfe, till we finde him selfe.

But we must remember sixe conditions, required in them, who would seeke the Lord rightly: first, we must seeke him in Christ the Mediatour. No man can come to the Father but by the Son; and *He is able also perfectly to saue all that come vnto God by him.* And this excludes Papists (who content them not with the Mediatour) from the right seeking of God.

Secondly, we must seeke him in truth: for God is a God of truth; he will be worshipped in spirit and truth: for God is a Spirit, and loueth truth in the inward affections. And this is the condition which here is required; Blessed are they who seeke him with their whole heart. And this excludes hypocrits.

Thirdly, we must seek him in holiness: *Let euery one that calles on the name of the Lord depart from iniquity:* and again, saith the Apostle, *Follow peace and sanctification, without which no man can see the Lord.* And, *Whosoever hath this hope in himselfe* (namely, that he shall see God as he is) *purgeth himselfe, euen as he is pure.* And this condition excludes from seeking of God all Atheists, vncleane, vnpenitent persons.

Fourthly, we must seeke him aboue all things, and for himselfe: not as the carnall Iewes did, with whom the Lord was angry; *They haue vpon*

Sixe conditions
to be obserued
in the seeking
of God.

1
Seeke him in
Christ.
Heb. 7. 25.

2
Seeke him in
truth.
Ier. 10. 10.
Ioh. 4. 24.
Pl. 1. 51.

3
Seeke him in
holinesse.

Heb. 12.
1 Ioh. 3.

4
Seeke him a-
boue all things,
and for him-
selfe.

Hos.

Aug.



5

Seeke him by
his owne light.
Rom. 1. 21.

6

Seek him with-
out wearying.

Psal. 34. 5.

upon me for wine and oyle. It is a great dishonouring of God, when any thing is sought from him more then himself, or not for himself: *Qui quis à deo, prater deum querit, non castè deum querit;* as if his creatures served not to this end, principally to lead vs vnto himselfe, or among them all there were any thing more precious then himselfe: and this excludes mercenaries and worldlings.

Fiftly, we must seek him by the light of his own word: the Gentiles sought to finde him by the light of nature, but they *became vaine in their imaginations, and their foolish heart being full of darknes,* could neuer find him. As the Sun without the light, of it selfe, cannot be knowne; so God, without his owne light, which shines in his word, cannot be known: *No man hath seene God at any time; the Sonne who hath come from the bosome of the Father, he hath declared him;* and the direction of the Sonne is, *Search the Scriptures.* And this excludes all those children of darknesse, who disdainning the light of the word, depend vpon phantasies, or presumptions of their owne.

Last of all, we must seeke him diligently, and with perseverance; neuer resting till we finde him, with the Spouse in the Canticles. We must not seeke him by startings, casting off all care when we finde him not at the first; but without wearying, wee must wait vpon him: *They that*
locke

looke unto him (that is, constantly attend vpon him) *their faces shall not bee ashamed.* And this excludes carelesse Christians, and temporizers, who seeke him by starts, but continue not.

VER. 3. *Surely they worke none iniquity, that walke in his wayes.*

THis Verse containes a commendation of the word of God, from this notable fruit and effect thereof: that they who keepe it, are kept by it from iniquity; and so made partakers by it, of the third degree of man his felicity, which is sanctification.

If it be demanded here, How is it that they who walke in Gods wayes, worke none iniquitie? Is there any man who liues, and sinnes not? And if they be not without sinne, How then are they to be blessed? The answer is, as the Apostles sayes of our knowledge; *Wee knowe but in a part:* so is it true of our felicity on earth, wee are blessed but in a part. It is the happinesse of Angels, that they neuer sinned: it is the happinesse of triumphant Saints, that albeit they haue beene sinners, yet now they sinne no more; but the happinesse of Saints militant, is, that our sinnes are forgiven vs; and that albeit sinners remaine in vs, yet it raignes not ouer vs:
it

If we keepe
Gods word, it
keepe vs.

How it is that
the Saints of
God worke no
iniquity.

Rom. 7.

Three things
concur to the
working of
iniquity.



1. Ioh. 3.

Why the life of
a godly man is
called Gods
way.

it is done in vs, but not by our allowance: *I doe the euill which I would not; not I, but sinne that dwells in me.*

Secondly, to the working of iniquity, these three things must concur; first, a purpose to do it; next, a delight in doing it; thirdly, a continuance in it: which three, in Gods children neuer concur; for in sinnes done in them by the old man, the new man makes his exceptions and protestations against them: It is not I, sayes hee; and so farre is hee from delighting in them, that rather his soule is grieved with them: euen as Lot, dwelling among the Sodomites, was vexed by hearing and seeing their vnrighteous deeds. In a word, the children of GOD are rather sufferers of sinne against their willes, then actors of it with their willes; like men spiritually oppressed by the power of their enemy: for which they sigh and crie vnto God, *Miserable man that I am, who will deliuer mee from this bodie of Death?* And in this sense it is, that the Apostle saith, *Hee who is borne of GOD sinneth not.*

In his wayes.] The course of mans life, ordered according to the worde of the Lorde, is called the way of GOD; first, because it pleaseth him; and next, because it leades vs vnto him. There are many desirous to be where the Lord is, that shall neuer com thence; & all because they delight not in the way, that leads vnto him: blessed

bleſſed are they who walke in this vvay. Con-
firme mine heart, ô G o d, that I may keep it vn-
to the end.

V E R. 4. *Thou haſt commanded to keepethy pre-
cepts diligently.*

AL the ſinnes vvhiçh in this age men com-
mit againſt the Lord, proceed cyther
from rebellion, or at leaſt, from obliui-
on of his commaundements: for now in this
great light, all excuſe of ignorance is taken away.
None of the former two are good; but of the
two, rebellion is the vvorſt. Gods children ab-
horre it as a diucliſh euill, to rebell againſt God:
how-euer by obliuion many times they fall, both
in ſinnes of omiſſion and commiſſion; ſo long as
they remember what God hath commanded to
be done, and what reaſons they haue to obey
him, they are not eaſily ſnared: but beeing once
preuented by obliuion, they are eaſily caried vn-
to tranſgreſſion. It is good therefore to keep in
our hearts with *Canid*, this ſhort remedy againſt
obliuion. *Thou haſt commanded to keepe thy pre-
cepts diligently.* As the eyes of ſeruants looke vn-
to the hand of their Maſters: ſo ſhould our
eyes vvait vpon the Lord our G o d, euer loo-
king to that way, vvhere-vnto his countenance
both direct vs.

The ſinnes of
this age, are ei-
ther of obliui-
on or rebellion:
excule of igno-
rance is taken
from them.

By obliuion
men are eaſily
caried to re-
bellion.

Pſal. 123. 2.

Three reasons
to moue vs to a
carefull dili-
gence to obey
the Lord.

Diligently.] In worldly affaires no weighty thing can be done without diligence: farre lesse in spirituall. *Cursed be he that doth the worke of the Lord negligently.* For three causes should we keepe the commandements of the Lord with diligence: first, because our aduersary, that seeks to share vs by the transgression of them, is diligent in tempting; *For he goes about, night and day, seeking to deuoure vs*: next, because we our selues are weake and infirme; by the greater diligence haue we need to take heed to our selues; thirdly, because of the great losse we sustaine by euery vantage Sathan gets ouer vs. For we finde by experience, that as a wound is sooner made then it is healed: so guiltines of conscience is easily contracted, but not so easily done away.

VER. 5. *O that my wayes were directed to keepe thy Statutes!*

The godly an-
swer Gods pre-
cepts with a
prayer.

IN the former verse, *Dauid* hath meditated vpon the commandement of God. Now the fruit of his meditation is, ye see, a prayer vnto God; wherein he wishes, that all his actions were answerable to the commandements of God: this is customable vnto the godly, to answere all the precepts of God by prayers; what he commaunds them to doe, they seeke from himselfe grace to doe it.

My wayes.] In this Psalm, sometime ye see mention is made of Gods wayes, as Vers. 3. and sometime of man his wayes, as Vers. 5. It is well with man, when his wayes and Gods wayes are all one: for if man haue another way then the way of God, of necessity his end must be miserable. God is the fountaine of life; he that walks not with God, abides in death: God is the father of light; he that will goe from him, shall goe to blacknes of darknes, yea, to vtter darknes, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth: *Loe, all they that withdraw themselves from thee shall perish*; therefore will we resolute with Dauid, *It is good for me to draw neere vnto the Lord.*

Dauid knowing that naturally man is diuided from God, and hath a way of his own, which will not faile to lead him vnto a miserable end: he wisheth from his heart, to be vnited with the Lord; that Gods will were his will, and Gods way were his way. This is a worke about the power of nature: and therefore he humbly prayes, that God would worke it, *Dignoscens quod ex seipso nihil possit efficere, nisi Dei ope, & gratia adiutus fuerit*; humbly acknowledging, that in the framing of his waies to Gods will, of himselfe he was able to do nothing, without the help of grace: *We are not of our selues able to thinke a good thought; our sufficiency is of God*: neither is it in him that wils, nor in him that runnes, but in God that shewes mercie.

It cannot be well with man, when his way is contrary to Gods way.

It is a worke of Gods mercy and power, to draw a man from his owne way to Gods way.

Euthym.

VER. 6. *Then should I not be confounded, when I haue respect vnto all thy commandements.*

The miserable
effects of sin.

Iam. 1.
It offends both
God and man;
but hurts him
most that did
commit it,
Ierem.

Easyl.

Sinne hath many euill fruites: it offends God, and grieues his Spirit; it hurts thy neighbour: for by it, thou temptst some, and infectst others; but the sorest wound it giues to thy selfe: for it brings vpon thee shame & confusion, and in the end eternall death; *For sinne when it is finished, brings out death. Thy owne wickednes shall reprove thee: and thou shalt knowe that it is an euill thing & a bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God.* How were *Adam* and *Euah* confounded after their fall? how ran they away from the Lord, in whom they delighted before? How lurked they among the bushes? thinking shame of themselves, they sought to couer their nakednes. *Prauaricationis enim fructus est cōfusio.* If we think to pluck better fruit from the tree of sinne, we doe but deceiue our selues. It standeth true in all, which the Apostle spake of the Romans: *When ye were the seruants of sin, yee were freed frō righteousness: what fruite had yee then of those things wherof yee are now ashamed?* The end of these things is death. If therefore vvee thinke euill to be confounded with shame, let vs bevvare we be not perverted by sinne.

Respect to all thy Commandements.] Wee must not make a diuision at our owne hand of the com-

commaundements of G O D ; making a shew to keepe some, and taking libertie to transgresse others: as *Naaman* did, who resolued that hee vvould offer no sacrifice vnto any other God, saue onely to the Lord; onely this he reserued, that he would bow with his Master the King of Assur to the Idole *Rimmon*.

Like him are many now; vvho professe they will serue the Lord, but still reserue an Idole of their owne, to the which their heart enclines: so answer the Lord with halfe obedience; like the Eccho, which makes not a perfit response of the voice of men, but of some part thereof. But the commaundements of G O D are so vnited among themselues, that *hee who failes in one point of the law, is guiltie of all*: and therefore, to every one of them should we giue obedience; wherein, if wee cannot doe what wee should, yet at least should we haue a respect, a purpose, and a care so to do, hauing a begun obedience to them all, not exempting our selues frō any. And this for them who thinke all is well if they be not adulterers, when in the meane time they are idolaters; and so forth of the rest.

Wee should make conscience of all God his commaundements.

The halfe obedience of the wicked, is like the voice of an Eccho.

Iam. 2. 10.

*VER. 7. I will praise thee with an upright heart,
when I shall learne the iudgements of thy right-
eousnes.*

Thankfulnes
to God com-
mended for
four causes.

Psalme.

First, for the
equitie of it;
sith we take
good things
from God, why
should we not
giue him glo-
ry?

Secondly, for
the object
thereof; which
is God, the
treasure of all
good.

IN this verse wee haue a prayer for further knowledge; together with a protestation of *Dauid* his thankfull affection for it. Thankfulness is a dutie, wherein we are all obliged to the Lord. *It is a good thing for upright men to praise thee Lord.* It is good, first, in regard of the equitie of it. Sith the Lord giues vs good things, shal not we giue him praises againe? especially seeing the Lord is content so to part all his works between his Maiestie, and vs, that the good of them be ours, the glorie of them be his owne. When we haue taken good things from him, why shall we defraude him of his part, that is, glory by thanksgiving? Surely, the earth, which renders increase to them that labour it, the ox that knowes his owner, and euery beast in their kind, that bowes to the hand of him who giues it meat, shal condemne vnthankfull man, who receiues dailie from the Lord, but neuer returnes praises vnto him.

Secondly, it is good to praise the Lord in regard of himselfe, who is the object of our prayes. Sith he is the treasure of all good, the author of all blessings, it cannot be but a good and blessed thing to blesse him.

Third.

Thirdly, it is good in respect of our associates & companions in this exercise: the Angels, Cherubins, and Seraphins, delight continually in his praises. Our elder brethren, that glorious congregation of the first borne, are described vnto vs, falling downe on their faces, casting their crownes at the feet of the Lord, to giue him the glory of their redemption. Now, seeing wee pray that the will of God may be done in earth, as it is in heauen, why doe we not delight in these exercises of praising God, by which we haue fellowship with them who are glorified in heauen?

Lastly, it is good in respect of the great benefits wee receiue by it: nothing thereby accrues to the Lord, all the vantage is our owne; *Gratiarum actio, est ad plus dandum invitatio.*

With an upright heart.] Many muscicall instruments had they vnder the law, where-with they prayed God, as ye may see in the last Psalm: but such as were spirituall among them, knew that all these availed nothing, vnlesse the hart had been well tuned, and prepared. This is to make them ashamed, who now in a greater light, come to praise God, but forget their hart behind them; or else bring it very euill tuned, full of so many discordant desires, that they cannot (as they are commaunded) make melody to the Lord in their harts.

When I shall learne.] But when, saies *Dauid*, he will be thankfull? euen when God shall learne

B 4

him:

Thirdly, for the associates wee haue in this exercise; namely, Angels, & our elder brethren.

Lastly, for the great good wee get by it.

The best muscicall instrument for Gods praises, is an upright hart.

Both the matter, & the grace of thankfulness is from God.

him: both the matter and the grace of thankfulness is from God. As he did with *Abraham*, he commaunded him to worship, and gaue him the sacrifice: so doth he with all his children; for he giues not onely good things for vvhich they should thanke him, but in like manner grace, by which they are able to thanke him.

VER. 8. *I will keepe thy Statutes, forsake me not
ouer-long.*

Purposes wold
be seconded
with prayers.

THis verse contains a protestation, that he was resolved to keepe the Lords Statutes: which because he knewe of himselfe he was not able to accomplish; with this protestation of his purpose, he ioynes a prayer, wherein he craues to be assisted, and not forsaken of the Lord.

A resolution to
be godly, is a
great beginning
of a godly
life.

It is a great helpe to godlinesse, to resolve that we will liue godly; for that which is not concluded, how shall it be performed? or what hope is there we should attaine to the end, that is, to the perfection of pietie, when we are carelesse of the beginnings thereof? which are purposes, intentions, and resolutions that wee will be godly? Where, when of weakenesse we faile in following forth our resolution, it shall be well done againe to renew it: for by often renewing of our resolution to doe any good, wee become the
Stronger

stronger to accomplish it.

For sake me not over-long.] It is a feareful thing to be vtterly and finally forsaken of the Lord, as *Iudas* was, who therefore *Parata inimico præda factus est*. For man left vtterly to himselfe, becomes a prey to the enemy, and can no more stand by himselfe, then a staffe not sustained by the hand of man: and therefore doth *Dauid* pray that the Lord would not forsake him.

And yet because he knew, that the Lord exercises his deereft children with temporall desertions, forsaking them for a time, and withdrawing his helping hand from them, *ex eo commodū ipsorum procurans* (as is euident in *Pefer*, vwho was left for a time to himselfe, that the prooffe of his owne weaknes might make him more humble, and lesse confident in himselfe) therefore he craues not simply to be freed of desertion; but that, if the Lord will desert him, to try him, or to humble him, he would not desert him ouer-long.

Such as know what help and comfort the presence of the Lord in mercy brings to his childrē, they think a short time of his abience a very long time. *Abfalom* spake out of his policie, that it was better for him to die, then liue and not see his Fathers face: but in truth, it is more bitter then death to the godly, to liue in the body, and not be refreshed with the fauourable beames of the countenance of God: and therefore they pre-
uent

A fearefull
plague to be
forsaken of
God.
Basil.

Gods children
many times ex-
ercised with
temporall de-
sertions.

To a godly
man, a short
time of Gods
abience is long

uent the desertion with prayer, as heere *David* doth, *For sake me not over-long*. And when they are exercised with it, al other comforts are loathsome to them: they sigh and cry continually, *How long, o Lord, how long? Will the Lord absent himselfe for ever, &c.* They run with the Spouse in the *Canticles*, to & fro, seeking him; and with the mourning *Maries*, they shed teares vncessantly, till they find him againe, and hee shew his fauourable face vnto them.

BETH.



BETH.

VER. 9. *Where-with shall a young man redresse his way? in taking heede thereto according to thy woord.*

SAint *James* compares the word of God to a glasse, whereinto hee, vwho looks rightly, may see two images; the image of God, to the which wee should be conformable, and our owne naturall image. What we are by nature, and how farre altered from that first exemplar of God his image, wherevnto we were created, may be euident to any man that vwill consider himselfe in the glasse of the word, and that especially will try himselfe by this Psalm. When we read it, and dare not in a good conscience say that for our selues, which *David* protests of himselfe, let vs thereby knowe how far we are from that which we should be, and studie to amend it.

As the first section, marked with the letter *a*, containes eight verses, euerie one of them beginning vwith that letter: so the eight verses of this second section, begin all with this letter *a*. For heere

Gods word is a glasse, representing to vs both Gods image and our owne.

As words and sentences cannot be without letters: so no good in religion or manners without the word.



David edifies others with that which had done himselfe good.

The word is needfull for all, specially for young men; and why.
Amb. lib. de viduis.

Na'zi'm. orat. 46. in Ecclesiast.

Prou. 22. 15.

heere is deliuered vnto vs an A. B. C. of godlinesse, consisting of 22. letters; and eight times in euery letter is the vvord of GOD commended to vs; to teach vs, that as words and sentences cannot be without letters: so no good in any religious durie can be performed, without the vvord of God.

This ninth verse containes a commendation of the vvord, from the profitable effect thereof: and it is proposed by way of a Dialogue, a question asked, and an answer giuen. *David* beeing a young man in the Court of *Saul*, and refrained from that licentious conuersation, whereinto others deborred, now he deliuers that for the edification of others, which hee had learned by experience had done good to himselfe.

The vvord is needfull for all sorts of men; but specially for young men, because this age of al other, is most subiect to the dangerous disease of inordinate lusts: *Vicina lapsibus est adolescentia*. And therefore, as they who are sicke of the Feuer, haue need of cooling things, and young vndaunted colts haue need of the stronger bits: so is the furie of youth to be tempered, and bridled by the vvord.

Inuentus est assecla est stultitia; stultitia autem ad exitium ducit: the Page of youth is foolishnesse; and foolishnesse if it be not cured, leads to destruction. *Foolishnes*, said *Salomon*, is bound in the hart of a child: but the rodde of correction will

will drive it away. And what better correction can be to cure it, then the whollsome information of the word of God: this is the yoke which is good for a man to beare in his youth. But alas! it is lamentable, that no age doth so much despise the word, as this, which most stands in need of it.

Lam. 3. 27.
Youth commonly most profane.

It is now a rare thing, to find among young men a *Ioseph*, or a *Samuel*: where they should live as *Nazarits*, consecrate to the Lord, they are rather like men who have vowed and dedicated themselves unto Satan. As the sonnes of *Eli* despised the rebuke of their father: so young men now (for the most part) are impatient of the rebukes of the word; contemning the medicine, which *David* by experience found most effectual, to cure the disordered affections of youth.

Amos. 2.

Among those sacrifices where-with God was honored in the law, he required their first fruits to be consecrate to him; eares of corne dryed by the fire, and wheat beaten out of the green eares: teaching vs to honour the Lord, not onely with the first fruits of our increase, but of our selues also. It is an euill diuision that is made by many, who giue their young age to Satan by the seruice of sin, and beight their old age to the Lord: for so they incurre that curse of *Malachie*; *Cursed be hee that hath a strong beast in his flocke, and vowes, and sacrificeth a corrupt thing vnto the Lord.*

It is an euill diuision, when young yeeres are giuen to Satan, and olde age to the Lord.
Leuit. 2. 14.

Malach.

The

How the
strength of
young age
should be de-
clared.

1. Ioh. 1. 24,
15, 16.

It a double sin
and shame for
old men to be
vngodly.

A miserable e-
uill, to come to
Canaans bor-
ders and be put
backe againe.

The seruency & strength of youth should be im-
ploied, nor in the satisfaction of their lusts, but in
the seruice of their God, & in fighting against Sa-
than. This is it which that youngest Disciple of
our Lord, requires of young men; that hauing
the *Word of God abiding in them*, they may be
strong to ouercom the wicked: not louing the world,
nor things that are in the world (such as) *lust of*
the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life. These
are not of the Father, but of the world; and the
world passeth away and the lust therof: but he that
fulfils the word of God abides for ever.

But how-euer mention be made here of young
men only; yet as no age is without the owne ten-
tations and blemishes: so haue they all need to
take heed to the word, that they may learne to re-
dresse their wayes. It is a double shame and sinne
for an old man to be of an vncleane life, or igno-
rant of the word. Such as had liued long without
making progresse in knowledge and godlinesse,
were properly called by *Philo, Longani pueri*.
The neerer we drawe vnto Canaan, the fur-
ther should we be from the delights of Egypt:
otherwise it shall come to passe in God his righ-
teous iudgements, that when in regard of thy
long iourney, thou art at the very borders of
Canaan, thou shouldest be put further backe a-
gaine with these carnall Israelites; yea, neuer suf-
fered to enter into it. O miserable condition of
that man, whose body is declyning to the graue,
but

but his spirit hath not learned to ascend to him that gaue it: he comes, as I said, to the border of Canaan, to the very point of time, wherein Gods children make their happy transmigration; but by reason of his sinnes he is thrust backe againe: when he should die and ascend to the blessed fellowship of God the Father of light, he dies and descends to the pit of vtter darkenesse, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Now the maner of the answer, which he makes to his former Interrogatiue, commends the certainty of his counsell: for he answers by turning his speech to the Lord, from whom he had obtained by praier this knowledge, How to govern his life; *Vt sic non presumptionis humana sed dignationis diuina remedium crederetur*, that so it might be knowne vnto others, that this remedy came not from humane presumption, but diuine reuelation.



Knowledge to
gouern the life
aright, is the
good gift of
God.

Amb.

VER. 10. *With mine whole hart haue I sought thee:
let me not wander from thy Commandements.*

WHat *Dauid* deliuered by way of instruction vnto other yong men, he now shewes that he practised himselfe: for this Verse containes a protestation of that earnest desire hee had to haue his life ordered by the written worde of God. That hee sayes I haue sought thee with

Dauid practised that which he taught to others,

Hee was far frō
Pharisaicall
boasting of his
owne perfecti-
on.

Basil.

The begin-
ning, continu-
ing, and per-
fecting of our
saluation, is of
God.
Heb. 12.

Dauid hid not
the talent hee
receiued.

with my whole heart, imports no presumptuous boasting of his owne perfection; but rather, a sense and feeling of his owne wants, which made him the more earnestly to seek: for seeking is of those things, which a man wants, & faine would haue. And where he saith, *he sought the Lord with his whole hart*, he speakes it by comparison; *Ad differentiam eorum qui Deum non toto corde quarunt, sed illud in curas seculares, et concupiscentias absurdas partiuntur.*

Let me not wander.] As our first calling, so our cōtinuing in the state of grace is of the Lord: for hee is both the author, and finisher of our faith.

Customable in holy Scripture, elect men are called the Sheepe of Christ; to tell vs, that all our welfare, consists in the prouident care of our Pastor: who first, must keepe vs that we wander not; and next, when of infirmities vvee wander, must reduce and bring vs home againe.

VER. II. *I haue hid thy promises in mine heart, that I might not sinne against thee.*

IT is not *Dauids* meaning, that hee had hid the talent vvhich hee receiued from the Lord, after the manner of that vnprofitable seruauant: for that he did put his talent to the vttermost profit for the edification of others,
hee

he witnesseth both by this Psalm and many other; specially Psal. 40. *I haue declared thy righteousness vnto the great Congregation: lo, I will not reframe my lippes, O Lorde, thou knowest. I haue not hid thy righteousness within my heart, but I haue declared thy truth and thy saluation: I haue not concealed thy mercy and truth from the great Congregation.* What is this then *Dauid* affirms, that he hath not hid Gods righteousness within his heart? Here he protests, that hee hid Gods promises in his heart. Surely here is no contradiction: for in the one he shewes how his first care was to comfort and confirme himselfe by the promises of God; and next, to benefite others. And truly, he that doth not first edifie his owne heart in the assurance of Gods mercy, can neuer be a meet instrument to declare the mercies of God vnto others.

There is great difference betweene Christians and Worldlings. The Worldling hath his Treasures and Jewels without him: the Christian hath them within. Neyther indeede is there any recepracle, wherein to receiue and keepe the word of consolation, but the heart onely. If thou haue it in thy mouth onely, it shall be taken from thee: if thou haue it in thy Booke onely, thou shalt misse it when thou hast most to doe with it: but if thou lay it vp in thy heart, as *Marie* did the wordes

C

of

Psal.

He that edifies
not his owne
heart with
mercy, is not
meet to speake
of it vnto o-
thers.

Christians
haue their trea-
sure within,
Worldlings
without them.

The godly
make not a
vaine shew of
grace, but
lock it vp in
the heart, to
hide it from
their enemies.

Basil.

Worldlings
carelesse of the
heauenly trea-
sure conuincd.

of the Angel, no enemy shall euer be able to take it from thee; and thou shalt finde it a comfortable treasure in time of thy need.

They who possesse earthly riches, expose them not to the eyes and hands of euery one; they locke them vp in their surest places, to conserue them from theeues and robbers: it is euen so here with holy *Danid*; he knew no good spirituall, can be possessed here in this earth, without temptation. That subrill Serpent, who stole from our first parents the glorious Image of God, wherein consisted their originall felicity and happinesse, dorth yet enuy and rage, when he sees the children of *Adam*, restored to the possession of any spirituall graces: and therefore *Danid*, like a wise man, *Abcondit illas in animo suo, ne eas per inanem gloriam, aut incuriam, animarum depradatores furentur.*

This one example may condemne the folly of worldlings: the smallest jewell they haue, yea, the Charter of their smallest possessions, they can hide well enough, and lay it vp sure from them who would defraude them of it; but as for the promises of God, which are the Charters of our heauenly inheritance, they neglect them altogether. For alas, how many be there, who affirm in word that heauenly inheritance to be theirs? who if they be examined vpon their warrants, cannot bring out of the treasure of their heart, so much

much as one promise of God, whereby it is made sure vnto them.

That I might not sinne.] Among many excellent vertues of the word of GOD, this is one; that if we keepe it in our heart, it keepe vs from sinne, which is against God, and against ourselues. We may marke it by experience, that the word is first stollen eyther out of the minde of man, and the remembrance of it is away: or at least out of the affection of man, so that the reuerence of it is gone, before that a man can be drawne to the committing of a sinne. So long as *Enab* kept by faith the word of the Lord, she resisted *Sathan*; but from the time she doubted of that, which God made most certaine by his word, incontinent she was snared.

If we keepe the word, it will keepe vs.

VER. 12. *Blessed art thou, O Lorde: teach me thy Statutes.*

THE soule of a man truly godly, when he commeth to seeke God, findes in him selfe so manifolde wants, and in the Lord so plentiful mercies, that he can neuer be satiate with seeking, till he be filled: and therefore is it, that hauing sought much, yea, and gotten much; yet he seekes more: as through all this

The soule of the godly cannot be satisfied in this life,

Men are care-
lesse to seeke
God, because
they know not
what a iewell
he is.

But seeke the
creatures as if
their happines
stood in them.

To be taught
by man is no-
thing, if God
teach not.

this Psalm we may see, *Dauid* can make no end of prayer: and this may make vs ashamed of our cold, faint, and feeble prayers.

This Verse containes a prayer, with a reason of the prayer. The prayer is, *Teach me thy Statutes*: the reason, mouing him to seeke this, ariseth of a consideration of that infinite good which is in GOD. He is a blessed GOD, the Fountaine of all felicitie; without whom no welfare, nor happinesse can bee to the creature. And for this cause, *Dauid* earnestly desiring to be in fellowship and communion with GOD, which hee knowes none can attaine vnto, vnlesse he be taught of GOD to know Gods way, and walke in it: therefore, I say, prayeth he the more earnestly, that the Lord would teach him his Statutes. Oh that we also could wisely consider this, that our felicity stands in a fellowshippe with GOD. This meditation would weaken or diminish in vs those vnquiet and fruitlesse cares wee haue to enioy the creature: for, alas, man seekes the creatures as if his life, and happinesse stood in them; but is negligent in the seeking of the Lord: and all because he knowes not, that his blessednesse stands in a communion with the blessed God.

Teach mee.] *Dauid* wanted not Prophets, such as *Nathan* and *Gad*, and *Leuits* his ordinary Doctors to teach him: but he knew all these

these were nothing, vnless *he were taught of God*. Man his teaching, if there be no more, cannot remedy the ignorance of the minde, farre lesse the corruption of the heart. *Pauls* planting, *Apollo* his watering, is nothing, if God worke not the increase: and therefore *Dauid* so vses the one, as knowing it could not profit without the other; *Hec à Domino quarit discere qua homines docere non poterant*. If this were practised now, to ioine prayer with hearing; that when wee offer our selues to be taught of men, we would therewith send vp prayer to God, before preaching, in time of preaching, and after preaching, we would soone proue more learned and religious, then we are.

Againe, *Dauid* was a Prophet himselſe, and a man of great knowledge, and yet often craues he that God would teach him more. Farre was he from the presumption of this age, which procures the perdition of many; with whom if ye speake concerning their knowledge, ye shal heare nothing, but that they know their God, their dutie, their conscience, and all: they will seeme ignorant of nothing, though indeed they doe nothing aright. When they heare so excellent a Prophet, so desirous of further knowledge, and so desirous to be taught; let them be ashamed to boast of their knowledge. *Va misera huic generationi, cui sufficere videtur sua insufficientia*.

C 3

Verſe.

Amb.

Doctrin should
be deliuered
and receiued
with prayer.



Such as haue
solid know-
ledge of salua-
tion, desire to
know more.

And none
thioke they
know enough,
but they who
know nothing.

Bern.

VER: 13. *With my lips haue I declared all the iudgements of thy mouth.*

Benefits recei-
ued being well
vsed, may make
vs bold to seek
more.

How Gyth Da-
uid he declared
Gods iudge-
ments, saith the
Apostle saith
they are vn-
searchable?
Psal. 35.
Rom. 11.
Ambrose.
Iudgements of
God are two-
fold, secret and
reuealed.

Here is a protestation of the thankfull
vse he had made of the benefits of God,
already receiued: he had tolde vnto o-
thers, what God had done to his soule: he had
not kept close God his louing kindnes. And tru-
ly this is a strong reason to backe our prayers
vnto God, when we dare say out of a good con-
science, that the benefits which we haue receiued
already, we haue vsed them to the glory of him,
who gaue them.

But here it may be demaunded: seeing the
Psalmist sayes, that the iudgements of God are as
a great deep, and the Apostle sayes, that they are
vnsearchable; How saith he now that he hath de-
clared all the iudgements of God? To this we
answer, *Non impugnat se velut contrarijs Scriptu-
ra venerabilis*: and therefore we must here make a
distinction, *Sunt iudicia occulta, qua Deus nobis
non patefecit, & iudicia oris qua annuntiauit, &
per os Prophetarum loquutus est*; there are secret
iudgements, and these *Dauid* leaues to the Lord:
there are againe the iudgements of his mouth;
which God hath declared and reuealed himselfe,
by the mouth of his seruants the Prophets. And
of these *Dauid* speaks here; I haue declared all
the iudgements of thy mouth.

So

So then here *David* protests, that what the Lord taught him, he also taught others. Some will teach, who themselves are not taught of God: these are in the Church, *non Concha, sed Canales*. Others, what they haue learned of God, declare not vnto others: these are guilty of hiding of the Talent, they haue receiued from the Lord.

With my lips.] The tongue is a most excellent member of the body, being well vsed to the glory of God, and edification of others; and yet it cannot pronounce without helpe of the lippes. The Lord hath made the bodie of man with such maruellous wisdom, that no member in it can say to another, I haue no neede of thee: but such is man his dulnesse, that he obserues not how stedable vnto him, the smallest member in the body is, till it be taken from him. If our lips were clasped for a time, and our tongue enclosed; we would esteeme it a great mercy, to haue it loosed againe: as that Cripple, when he found the vse of his feet, leapt for ioy and glorified God.

It is one of the workes wherein God declares his soueraigne power, *That hee takes away the speech from the faithfull*, or from them that speak truth. This he doth for two respects: sometime for a punishment of their hearers; so he threatened to make *Ezekiel* his tongue cleaue to the roofof his mouth: sometime for a correction

Men should learne before they teach.

Bern.

Man made with such wisdom, that no member in the body can say to another, I need thee not.

Speech taken from good men for two causes.
Iob 12.

I
For punishment of their people.

2
For correction
of themselves.

to themselves; so was *Zacharie* stricken with dumbnesse for his mis-beliefe. This should learne vs to be thankfull for the benefite of speech, and to vse it in feare and reuerence, to the glorie of God.

VER. 14. *I haue had as great delight in the way of thy Testimonies, as in all riches.*

The ioy gotten by Gods word, surmounts all worldly ioy whatsoever.
Basil.

Ambrose.

HEere is a protestation of his great delight, which he found in the way of the Testimonies of GOD: greater then worldlings can finde in the possession of riches; yea, of all riches. *Sunt enim multa diuitiarum genera; sed hac omnia complexus Propheta cum diuinis Testimonijs contulit:* for there are many sorts of riches; but the Prophet here, comprising them all in one, sets them farre inferior to the Testimonies of God. For we are not to thinke here that he makes any equality betweene these two; *Non quasi pro gratia qualitate cum spiritualibus comparatur corporalis voluptas, sed quasi ad testimonium suauitatis accersitur:* but to shew the greatnesse of the ioy, arising from the Testimonies of God, he shewes, that it alone surmounts all the pleasures, which of any externall thing can arise to worldlings.

It is a great argument of progresse in Religion, when godlinesse becomes a delight. *Malachie* com-

complaines of the carnall Iewes, that the seruice of God was a wearinesse to them : and alas, so is it to many carnall professors, who thinke no time long, but that which is spent in the exercise of the word, and prayer; all because they haue not yet learned with *Dauid*, to delight in it.

All the baits of Sathan, whereby he allures men to sinne, are pleasure or profit: if we be moued with these, it is wisdom to be most allured with the greatest pleasure and profit. The Apostle sayes, *Godlinesse is great gaine*: a godly man is *in omnibus diues, tanquam omne possidens patrimonium*. And againe, *Dauid* affirms that he found vnspokeable ioy in godlinesse. Sith it is so then, that the profit or pleasure of other things moues vs to goe after them; are we not inexcusable, if the profit & pleasure of godlinesse moue vs not to embrace it?

In the way of thy Testimonies.] The Testimony of God is his word; for it testifies his will: the way of this Testimony, is the practise of his word, and doing of that which he hath declared to be his will, and wherein he hath promised to shew vs his loue. *Dauid* found not this sweetness in hearing, reading, and professing the word onely; but in practising of it: and in very deed, the only cause why we finde not the comfort that is in the word of God; is, that we practise it not by walking in the way thereof. It is true, at the first it is bitter to nature which loues carnall libertie,

to

In a miserable state are they, to whom Gods word is a wearinesse.

Sathans baits are pleasure or profit; but we should not be moued with any of them: and why.

Amb.
1. Cor. 1.

It is not the hearing or reading of Gods word that will worke vs ioy, if we practise it not.

Basil.



Of the vexati-
on and vanity
of worldly
riches.

Ambros. in Luc.
cap. 16.
They flie far-
thest from vs,
when we haue
most need of
comforts.

to render it selfe, as captiue to the word: *Laboriosa virtutis via*, and much paines must be taken before the heart be subdued; but when it is once begunne, it renders such ioy, as abundantly recompences all the former labour and griefe.

As in all riches. A Commentary to this we haue in the fourth Psalm; where he glories that the ioy, arising of God his fauourable countenance, doth farre surmount al the ioy that worldlings can haue of their best things. Worldly riches vex men to get them, and vex them more how to keepe them; but most of all do they vex when they depart from men vnlook for: as it is sure they are no permanent goods, but of a flowing nature, like water; and in their owne time take wings and flie away: and that with so speedy a course, that quickly they go out of his sight, whom foolishly they delighted before. *Aliena a nobis sunt diuitie, quia prater Naturam sunt: neq; nobiscum nascuntur, neq; nobiscum transeunt.* But the word renders ioy in the first seeking of it; more ioy in keeping of it; most of all in this, that it endures and abides for euer. The comforts of the world are false comforts; they forsake a man when he hath most need of comfort, to wit, in the houre of death: but the word like a faithfull friend lies neere our heart, to comfort it most, when all other comforts are farthest from it.

Verf.

VER. 15. *I will meditate in thy precepts, and consider thy wayes.*

THese two last verses of this Section, present to vs a threefold internall action of *David* his soule, toward the word of God: first, Meditation; secondly, Consideration; thirdly, Delectation: euery one of these proceeds from other, and mutually strengthen one another. Meditation brings the word to the mind: Consideration views it, & looks at length into it; wherof is bred Delectation. That which comes into the mind, word it neuer so good, if it be not considered, goes as it came; leauing neither instruction, nor ioy: but being once presented by meditation, if it be pondred by consideration, then it breeds delectation: which is the perfection of godlines, in regard of the internall action. Thus we see, that a godly man is euer fruitfull in good: like that tree, planted by the riuers of waters. For at that same time when his externall good actions cannot be seene, he is not without internall good motions, breeding good in the root of his affection, which shortly brings our good fruit in his action, to the glory of God, and good of others.

As meat receiued in the stomach, profits not, if concoction follow not, to turne it into wholsom nourishment: so the word receiued by hearing,

or

A threefold internall action of the soule about the word.



How a godly man is euer fruitfull in good.

The necessity and vtility of meditation.

or reading cannot auaille vs, if it be not digested by meditation. In the lawe, beasts that did not chew their Cud, were accounted vncleane: figuring these to be of all others most vncleane, who hauing heard the word, are not made cleane by it; and all because they digest it not by prayer and meditation; to make it a conuenient foode for their famished soules.

The minde of man is restless, and vexes it selfe with euill, if it be not exercised with good.

Gods word should be the matter of our meditation.

*August.
Marcellino.
Iob 22.*

In thy Precepts.] The minde of man is restless, and cannot lie idle. As a Mill-stone, moued by the wheelles, grindes and consumes it owne selfe, if ye cast in no conuenient matter, whereupon it may worke: so the minde of man, if good be not furnished vnto it, shall worke vpon euill, vexing and annoying the owne selfe.

A meet subiect for meditation to the minde of man, is the precepts of the word of God: because, as they are from God vnto vs; so are they for vs, and we must be answerable to God for them. Earthly Lords, in their commandments to their seruants, seek their own aduantage: it is not so with the Lord our God; all his commandments are for the vantage and benefite of his seruants: *Nihil iubet quod sibi prosit. May a man be profitable vnto God? Is it any thing to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? Or is it profitable to him, that thou makest thy wayes upright?* yet are we bound to obey; and we must be countable for them: and therefore should they neuer goe out of our mind.

And

And consider thy wayes.] David his second internall action concerning the word, is Consideration : where marke well, how by a most proper speech he calles the word of God the way of God; partly, because by it God comes neere vnto men, reuealing himselfe to them, who otherwayes could not be knowne of them : for he dwels in light inaccessible; and partly, because the word is the way which leades men to God. So then, because by it God commeth downe to men, and by it men go vp vnto God, and know how to get accessse to him ; therefore is his word called his way.

Of Consideration, see Ver. 59.

The word is Gods way because by it God commeth to vs, and we go to him.

VER. 16. *I will delight in thy Statutes, and will not forget thy word.*

HEe protested before, that he had great delight in the Testimonies of God: now he sayth he will still delight in them. A man truly godly, the more good he doth the more he desireth, delights and resolues to do: Temporizers on the contrary, who haue but a shew of godlines, & the loue of it is not rooted in their hart; how soon are they weary of well-doing? If they haue done any small external duty of religiō, they rest as if they were fully sanctified, & there needed no more good to be done by thē.

True

The more good a godly man doth, the more he desires to do.

The graces of
the Spirit are
linked toge-
ther : lose one,
lose all ; keepe
one, keepe all.



True Religion is known by hungring and thirsting after righteousnesse; by perseuerance in well-doing; and an earnest desire to do more.

But to this he addes, that he will not forget the word. The graces of the Spirit do euery one fortifie and strengthen another; for ye see Meditation helps Consideration: who can consider of that whereof he thinkes not? Consideration againe breedes Delectation: and as here ye see, Delectation strengthens Memory: because he delights in the worde, hee will not forget the worde; and Memory againe renewes Meditation. Thus euery grace of the Spirit helps another: and by the contrary, one of them neglected, workes a wonderfull decay of the remnant. Faile in Loue, or in Patience, &c. Praier decays: faile in Prayer, all decays. We haue therefore so much the more carefully to eschue the neglect of any one grace, because in the losing of one we lose many: and if we want grace, we are altogether inexcusable; because if we haue a care to keepe any one principall grace, one shall keepe many graces vnto vs.

GIMEL.



G I M E L.

VER. 17. *Be beneficiall unto thy servant, that I may live and keepe thy word.*

IN the end of the former Section *David* had protestations: now in the beginning of this he hath prayers. In his protestations he acknowledgeth the beginnings which by grace he had made in godlinesse, to the praise and glory of God: in the prayers he acknowledgeth his wants, that he was farre from that which he should be; and therefore still beseecheth the Lord to bring forward to perfection, that which he had begun in him.

If ye marke the course of this Psalm, ye shall see, *David* cannot long abide in any purpose without prayer: he learned by experience, that prayer is the life of the soule. No more can the Soule live without prayer, then the Body can without breathing: and as *Samsons* strength was in his haire; so a Christians strength is in the grace of prayer. If this be taken from vs, we soone become a prey to the spirituall Philistims.

Our best estate
vpon earth, is,
that we haue
not that which
we should, and
yet want not
altogether.

The strength
of a Christian is
in his prayer.

Now

The greatest
benefit men re-
ceiue from
God, is grace
to obey him.

Constantine
the great his
notable saying,
It is more to be
a Christian
then a Mo-
narch of the
world.

So Dauid re-
ioyceth more
in this, that he
was Gods ser-
uant, then king
of Israel.

Now the first thing he craues as a speciall be-
nefit, is, that hee may liue and keep the word of
God. Many benefits had the Lord bestowed vpon
him: of a Shepherd he made him a King
to them all: he seeks this benefit, grace so to liue,
that he might keepe the word of the Lord: he
knew that without this, all other benefits are no-
thing; and so doe all Gods children, illuminate
with the light of God, if they were preferred to
be Monarches of the world. They count more of
this, To be Christians, wanting earthly King-
doms, then To be Kings, wanting Christianity.
As, good *Constantine*, albeit he knew he was ob-
liged to the Lord for making him an Emperor;
yet much more bound to his mercie, for ma-
king him a Christian. And indeede this life
without the other grace, though it were se-
conded with the highest honour and wealth
that euer befell to any man in his life, what is
it? Not an Introduction onely to eternall
death; but a procuring, and iust deseruing
of it.

Thy seruant.] That hee stiles himselfe so
frequently the seruant of GOD, notes in him
two things: first, a reuerent estimation hee
had of his GOD; in that hee accounts it
more honourable to bee called the seruant
of God, who was aboue him, then the King
of a mightie, auncient, and most famous
people, that vvere vnder him. And indeede,
fith

sith the Angels are styled his ministers, shall man thinke it a shame to serue him with them? and especially, sith he of his goodnes hath made them our seruants, *Ministring spirits to vs*? Should we not ioyfully serue him, who hath made all his creatures to serue vs; and exempted vs from the seruice of all other, and hath onely bound vs to serue him selfe?

That I may liue.] David ioynes heere two together, which whosoeuer disioynes, cannot be blessed. He desires to liue; but so to liue, that he may keep Gods word. To a reprobate man, who liues a rebel to his Maker, it had bin good (as our Sauour said of *Iudas*) that he had neuer been borne; that the knees had not preuented him; or, that incontinent after his birth, he had been buried. The shorter his life is; the fewer are his sinnes, and the smaller his iudgements.

But to an elect man, life is a great benefit: for by it he goes from election to glorification, by the way of sanctification. The longer he liues, the more good he doth, to the glory of God, the edification of others, and confirmation of his owne saluation; making it sure to him selfe, by wrestling and victory in tentations, and perseuerance in well dooing.

Without grace, this life is but a death: so the Spirit of God accounts of it; and therefore giues to most liuely naturall men, the name of dead men. *Omnia hic plena mortis sunt.* By the law, if

Sith Angels serue him, shall we think shame to serue him?

Naturall life makes a reprobate man in a worse case, then if he had neuer been.

But to an elect man, euen naturall life is a great benefit.

This life without grace, is but a death.

Num. 19.

Math. 8.

Eph. 5.

Miserable are
they, who de-
sire to liue for
loue of the
pleasures of sin.

A worthy me-
ditation of Na-
zianzen.

Satan by ex-
perience is
found a false
deceiuer.

a liuing man had touched the dead, hee was defiled: and wee, beside that wee carry death in our selues, where can we go and not touch the dead? Great need therefore haue wee, with *Dauid*, earnestly to seek this grace, that we may liue keeping the word of God: answering that commandment of our lord, *Relinq; mortuos*; and of his Apostle, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.*

For, as to the who loue to liue in the body, for no other end, but that they may enioy carnall pleasures in the body, no tongue can expresse their miserie. To a godly man, sin makes his life bitter: so the Apostle protested, *O miserable man! who shal deliuer me from this body of death?* And if they loue to liue, it is that they may mourn for sin, & break off the course of their sins by amēdement of life. This straited godly *Nazianzen*, that he knew not whether to make choise of death, or life: when he considered that death makes an end of sin, he desired to die; but when he remembered that after death there was no time to mourne for sin, he desired to liue.

VER. 18. *Open mine eyes, that I may see the wonders of thy law.*

MAN by nature is blind in the matters of saluation: *He vnderstands not the things of God, neither can he, because they are* *(spiritually)*

(spiritually discerned. Satan promised man great knowledge, both of good & euill: but experience may declare what a false deceiuer he is. By nature we are all borne blind, ignorant of things vvhich concerne the kingdom of God: and by reason of our darkned mind, so wicked is the hart of man, that by looking to the best works of God, miserable man contracts euill. So euill doth hee see, with the eyes which are left him, that by looking to that which is good, the hart of him is wakened vnto euill. So traiterously hath this aduersarie dealt with mankind, that where he promised the more knowledge, he spoiled them of that which they had; and hath brought now vpon them all, a greater shame then that vvhich *Nasib* the *Ammonite* vould haue done to *Israel*. For hee hath put out their right eye, that no light remaines in them vvhetherby they can see that which is good to saluation, till the Lord restore it againe vnto them.

And heere if it be asked, seeing *Dauid* was a regenerate man, and so illuminated already, How is it that hee prayes for the opening of his eyes? the aunswere is easie; That our regeneration is wrought by degrees. The beginnings of light in his mind, made him long for more: for no man can account of sense, but he who hath it. The light vvhich he had, let him see his owne darknes: and therefore feeling his wants, hee seekes to haue them supplied by the Lord. *Neque enim medicū*

How blind mā
is by nature.



Our regenera-
tiō is wrought
by degrees.

Ambrose.

If we be ignorant of the word, the blame is in our darke mind, not in it.
Vatab.

2. Cor. 3. 14.

Why many learned men attaine not to the knowledge of the truth.



Basil.

Illumination of the mind, is Gods worke.

rogat, nisi qui remedium aegritudini suae poscit.

But the word which here *David* vseth, imports the taking of a vaile from his eyes; *detrahe velamen oculis meis*. So that the blame of his ignorance he layes not vpon the word, which is cleer enough in it selfe; as he confesseth, ver. 130. *The entrance of thy vvord, giues light to the simple*: but he blames himselfe, and the vaile which couered the eyes of his mind. Till this be remooued, no reading, no hearing, no teaching, can make a man vnderstand the wonders of the lavv of God. This is it, saith the Apostle, which hinders the Iews, that in reading the old Testament, they cannot see Christ, because of the vaile that couers their harts. And this same is it, that this day hinders many wise and learned men, that albeit they read the most cleare prophecies of Antichrist, whereas *S. Paul* and *S. Iohn* poynts him out, as it were with the finger: yet can they not perceiue him. The doctrine of Christ, is the *mysterie of godlines*: the doctrine of Antichrist, is the *mysterie of iniquitie*. Who can learne it, till God remoue the vaile that couers the mind? *Non omnes, qui diuina eloquia legunt, quae in illis admiranda sunt considerant, nisi illi qui caelesti splendore potiuntur.*

But whose worke is this to remoue the vaile? Who is able to doe it? Certainly, neither Angel, nor Power, nor Dominion. It is onely the vvorke of G O D, who giues sight to the blind.

He

Hee sends forth his spirit, and renews the face of the earth. He opened the disciples eyes, & made them to know him. He made scales to fall from the eyes of the Apostle *Paul* when he converted him. These two benefits hee giues together to his owne; the opening of the eyes, and conversion of the hart. So long as a man abides vnder the seruitude of sin, and earthly affections, he can neuer haue eyes to see the secrets of Gods word. Therefore, saith the Apostle (speaking of the blinded Iewes) *when their harts shall be turned to the Lord, then the vaille shall be taken away.*

The wonders of thy law :] The wonders of the works of God are many and great: the wonders of his word are greater. Euery article of our faith, is a myserie to be wondred at: that a Virgine conceiues a child; that G O D is manifested in the flesh. If wee will be fruitfull scholars in the learning of these mysteries, let vs pray for the opening of our eyes, and for grace to belieue.

V E R. 19. *I am a stranger on earth: hide not thy commaundements from me.*

T His petition in effect is one with the former, hauing no more but an annexed reason, vvhich is this: I am a stranger on earth, and knowe not the way may lead me to

D 3 heauen

Psal. 104.
Luk 24.

2. Cor. 3. 16.

Euery Article
of our faith, is a
wonderful my-
serie.

Man on earth
is a stranger, &
knowes not the
way hee should
walk, till God
shewes it vnto
him.

Ambrose.
Worldlings
shal not conti-
nue on earth;
yet cannot say
they are stran-
gers in it.

And that be-
cause in affecti-
on they be con-
tent with this, &
desire not a
better.

Phil.

Reuel. 8.
Phil. 17.

heaven, vnlesse thou teach me; therefore hide not thy cōmandements from me. The like of this he hath, *Pla. 43. Send thy light, & thy trnth; let them lead me, & bring me to thy holy Mountaine.*

This is not the voice of euery man, I am a stranger on earth; *Sed eius qui terrenis renuntiauit voluptatibus, & mundana cupiditatis exnerit affectus.* It is the voice of him who hath renounced pleasures of the earth; is weary of this life; & desires to be dissolued: not fearing when his dissolution approches; but rather reioycing, because he knows he shall be with Christ, *utitur hac vita ut transitoria, ad aliam nimirum vitam festinans.* He vscth this life as a transitory life, because he makes hast to a better.

It is true, in regard of time and continuance, the wicked are also strangers on earth; but in affection they are not so: for neither know they of a better Citie, neither desire they a better. But the Christian accounts himselfe a stranger, not so much for his short continuance vpon earth, as for that his *πολιτεύμα* is aboue: that Citie wherof he is Burges and freeman; that countrey frō which he came; that fellowship wherein he reioiceth, is aboue; & therefore longs he to be where they are.

But as to the wicked, they are called by Gods Spirit, inhabitants, or indwellers of the earth: *Men of this world, who haue their portion in this life; they haue receiued their cōsolation here; their generation is of the earth; they speak of the earth; their*

their whole disposition is earthly. Higher then the earth, in thoughts and desires they cannot go: *Præsentibus bonis quasi diuturnus inflati insolescant.* The godly are not so: they are (as I said) pilgrims on earth, not indwellers. Suppose they walke on earth, their conuersation is in heauen: they are risen with Christ, and set their affections on those things, which are at the right hand of God. They vse this world, as if they vsed it not: knowing, that *σχημα*, the shape or figure thereof, passeth away; they sojourne in it, but vwill not dwell in it. But like vnto the Eagles (as they are figuratiuely called in the parable) they see, and sent things which are aboue, and mount vp toward their prey Christ Iesus; counting the most excellent things on earth, to be but dounge, in respect of him.

On earth.] He makes no exception heere: the whole earth hee acknowledged a place of his pilgrimage. Not only whē he was banished among the *Moabites*, & *Philistims*, was he a stranger: but euen when he liued peaceably at home, in *Canaan*, stil he thinks himselfe a stranger. This consideration mooued godly *Basile*, to despise the threatening of *Modestus*, the deputy of *Valens* the Emperor, when he braued him with banishment: *Ab exilijs metum liber sum, vnam hominum cognoscens esse patriam; paradysum, omnem autem terram commune Naturæ exilium.* And it shall moue vs to keepe spirituall sobrietie in the midst of

Worldlings are inhabitants of the earth; Christians are but strangers in it.

Basile.

Luke.

The whole earth is but a place of banishment.

Naxian, in vita Basile.

A man euen in his owne house should esteeme himselfe a stranger.

This world can neither wil nor teach men a way to go out of her selfe: we must seeke a guide fro heauen.



The right knowledge of the ten Commandements.

pleasures, if we remember that in our houses, at our owne fire end, and in our owne beds, wee are but strangers, from which we must shortly remoue, and giue place to others.

Hide not.] The maner of *Dauid* his reasoning, we touched before to be this: I am heere a stranger, and knowe not the way; therefore Lord direct me. The similitude is taken from passengers, who comming to an vncouth countrey, vwhere they are ignorant of the way, seeke the benefit of a guide; but the dissimilitude is heere. In any Countrey, the country people can guide a stranger to the place where he would be; but the indwellers of the earth, cannot shew the way to heauen: and therefore *Dauid* seekes no guide among them, but prayes the Lord to direct him.

Thy commandements.] We are not to thinke that *Dauid* was ignorant of the ten commandements; no doubt hee knew them, and could distinctly repeat them: but hee craues that God would further teach him the vse, the necessity, the vtility, the obedience of them. And this for our carnall professors, who if they can repeat the beliefe, and the commandements, think they are religious enough, albeit they neither belieue nor obey, but remaine ignorant of the vse & practise of the both: without which, ignorance is better then knowledge, for the seruant that knowes his Masters will, and doth it not, is worthy of double stripes.

VER. 20. *Mine hart breaks for the desire of thy iudgements alway.*

Here is a protestation of that earnest desire he had to the obedience of the word of God; he amplifies it 2. waies: first; it was no light motion, but such as beeing deeply rooted, made his hart to breake when hee saw that he could not do in the obedience therof as he would. Next, it was no vanishing motion, like the morning dew: but it was permanent, *Omnitempore*, he had it alway.

Thy iudgements.] Gods iudgements are of two sorts: first, his Commands; so called, because by them right is iudged, & discerned from wrong. Next, his plagues executed vpon transgressors according to his word. *Dauid* here meanes of the first. Let men who haue not the like of *Dauids* desire, remember, that they whose hart cannot break for transgressing Gods word because they loue it, shall find the plagues of God to bruite their body, and breake their hart also. Let vs delight in the first sort of these iudgements, and the second shall neuer come vpon vs.

Now, that *Dauid* this way presents his desire, is an effectuall manner of supplication; for desire of grace, is a great grace: *Non est potestatis nostra desiderium sanctum, sed gratie*; and the Lord hath bound himselfe by his promise to fulfill it. *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness,*

Two things required in true obedience.

Both the word and the plagues of God, are called his iudgements; & how.

Such as are not moued by the first, shall be confounded by the second.

A hart full of spirituall desires, is an argument of great grace. *Ambros.*

Ambrose.

Comfort a-
gainst cōtempt
of men, wherby
they scorne the
godly for sigh-
ing and teares.

The begonne
wrath of God
on them, shold
confirm vs a-
gainst their
contempt.

ousnesse, they shall be satisfied. And againe; *The Lord will fulfill the desires of them that feare him. Cum obletari nos viderit Deus cupiditate iudiciorum suorum, sobriam auget affectum.* And therefore *Dauid* here presents his hart full of desires to the Lord, that he may fill it.

And here, because the profane world makes a scorne of the contrite disposition of the godlie, laughing at their teares, taunting them in their sighes and sobs; let vs looke heere to *Dauid*. If it cannot alway be an argument to mooue men to godlinesse, yet is it forcible to moue God to mercie. The broken hart, for the grieve of sin, and loue of righteousness, how euer the world despise it, the Lord wil not despise it: yea, it is the sacrifice of God, acceptable to him in Christ Iesus.

V E R. 21. *Thou hast destroyed the proud. Cursed are they that do erre from thy commandments.*

H Ere *Dauid* confirms himselfe in godlines, by meditation of the miserable estate of the wicked, who lead a life contrary to Gods word: wherof the sum is; The begun iudgements of God executed on the wicked, may let vs see the curse of God on them, who follow their footsteps. Walking in the trade of their sinnes, how-euer they seem to prosper & flourish for the present, there is a curse of God vpon them, which will consume and destroy them.

Remin

Begun, or present iudgements of God vpon the wicked, should moue vs to abhor their sins. But in this great securitie we haue many *Lamechs*, few *Dauids*. *Lamech* saw the impunity of *Caine*: because he was not punished for his cruell murdering of his brother; therefore his hart was prouoked to the like impictie, and hercioyed in it. *I would slay a man in my wound, and a young man in mine hart: if Caine shall be avenged seauen fold, truly Lamech seauentie times seauen fold.* Thus in the pride and profaneness of his hart, did he mock, and abuse the patience of God. And so fareth it with many, of whom *Salomon* speakes; *Because iudgement is not speedily executed on the wicked, therefore the hart of the children of men is set in them to do euil.* But few are like *Dauid*, who when he saw *Vzzah* stricken to death, for vnreuerent touching of the Arke, was moued in his hart to a greater reuerence of God.

The proud.] This is a stile commonly giuen to the wicked: because as it is our oldest euill, so is it the strongest and first that strives in our corrupt nature, to cary men to a transgression of the borders appointed by the Lord. From the time that pride entered into *Adams* hart, that he would be higher then God had made him, he spared not to cate of the forbidden tree. And what else is the cause of all transgression, but that man in his ignorant pride, vvill haue his wil preferred to the will of God?

Sathan

But many wax worse with *Lamech*, when they see euill men spared.

Gene. 4. 24.
Few become better with *Dauid*, when they see them punished.

Eccles.

Wicked men commonly styled proud men, and why.

Proud Satan
hath made di-
sciples prouder
then himselfe.
Esay 14.
Ambr.

The miserable
condition of a
proud man.
Iam.



Ambrose.

Satan in his presumption, vsurped to be equal with G O D; *Similis ero altissimo*, like vnto the most high: *Cum sit nequissimus peiores tamen discipulos erudiuit*. He himselfe is a Prince of spirituall wickednesse, yet hath he trained vp disciples more vicked then himselfe; such as *That man of sinne*: who, as if it were little to be equall with G O D, extolls himselfe aboue G O D. And like him, are many blinded captiues of Satan, vwho in the pride of their heart, doe all they can, to subiect the Lord, his throne, his will, to their wicked and corrupt will.

These are fooles, and of all fooles the greatest, they set themselves as parties against the Lord, *for he resists the proud*; not considering that he is stronger then they, & they cannot stand before him. The Lord is the most high G O D: but it is not height makes a man stand before him. None so sure to stand in his sight, as they who are humble, and little in their own eyes, to them he giues grace. *Humilis non habet unde cadat*: where it is the iust recompence of the proud, that because they vsurpe to be before all others, the Lord puts them behind all, & casts them down to the lowest roome, for mounting to the highest. A notable example heereof, we haue in that Pharisee, who was not so farre before the Publican in his owne estimation, as he was behind him in the account of Christ, who iudgeth of things according as they are: *O quantum crimen superbia, ut ei etiam adulteria*

adulteria praeferantur.

Cursed are they which doe erre from thy commandements.] Heere first we haue to see how these words must be vnderstood. Saith not *Dauid* of himselfe, that he wandred like a lost sheepe? Saith he not also of others, *Who knowes the errors of his life?* How then doth he pronounce them cursed, which erre from the commandements of God? The answer is easily made, if we conioyne his words together; The proud which erre, are cursed.

Heere then we must put a difference, between finnes of pride, and of infirmitie: he that of rebellion and pride departs from Gods commandements; not so, he that finnes of weaknesse: in whom euery sin committed, increaseth a grieffe for sinne, a hatred of sinne, and a care to vvithstand it; for these, there is no condemnation. These are not vnder the law, but vnder grace. Mercie alwaies waits on them, as a refreshing medicine to restore them, when of infirmitie they fall.

But as for the wicked, who sinne & are proud and impenitent in their finnes, the curse of God is vpon them, though it be not scene at the first. Like a Moth, or secret cōsumption, it eates them vp; it shall deuoure their substance, & shal quickly turne their glory and prosperitie, into shame and confusion.

Euery error is dangerous, but proud error accured.

Sinnes of pride and of infirmitie, should be distinguished.

Curse of God on the wicked, is like a secret consumption,

VER. 22. *Remoue from mee shame & contempt:
for I haue kept thy testimonies.*

*Dauid his ap-
pellation to
God, from the
wrongfull iudg-
ments of men.*

D*Auid*, beeing a young man, liued godlie in the Court of *Saul*: and for godlinesse was mocked and disdained of others. For so the blind world counts religion a matter of mockerie: which in the estimation of Gods Spirit, is man his greatest gain and glory. But from time they saw that *Saul* the King was displeased with *Dauid*, then did all his flatterers speake against *Dauid*, doing what they could to sleigh his honest name with calumnies and slaunders: And hee, borne downe with the iniquitie of time, commits his cause to the Lord; beseeching him, who knew his conscience, to cleere his innocencie. Which he also did: for the shame and contempt which they thought to bring vpon *Dauid*, God poured it vpon themselves.

*How Dauid
iustifies him-
selfe before
God, and man.*

For I haue kept thy testimonies.] Sometime *Dauid* iustifies himselfe in regard of men. And if at any time he reioyce in his vprightnesse before God, it is not a boasting of his owne perfection, but rather a comforting of himselfe, from the honestie of his affection.

VER.

VER. 23. *Princes also did sit and speake against mee: but thy seruant did meditate in thy statutes.*

THese two last verses of this section, containe two protestations of *Dauid* his honest affection to the word. The first is, that albeit he was persecuted, and euil spoken of, and that by great & honorable men of the world, such as *Saul*, and *Abner*, and *Achitophel*; yet did hee still meditate in the statutes of God.

It is a hard tentation when the godly are troubled by any wicked men; but much harder when they are troubled by men of honor & authoritie. And that first, by reason of their place: the greater power they haue, the greater perill to encounter with their displeasure; therefore said *Salomon*, *The wrath of a King, is the messenger of death.*

Next, because Authorities and Powers are ordained by God, *not for the terror of the good, but of the euill.* And therefore it is no small grieue to the godly, when they find them abused to a contrary end: that where a Ruler should bee to good men, like raine to the fields new mowen; on the contrary, hee becomes a fauourer of euill men, and a persecuter of the good. Then iustice is turned into wormwood: that vvhich should bring comfort to such as feare God, is abused to oppresse them.

And

A triall of true religion,

A hard tentation to be troubled by men of great authority for two causes.
1. For their power.
Prou.

Rom. 13.
2. For their place.

Psalme.

Princes godly
and religious,
are a great
blessing of
God.

Great cause
haue we to be
thankfull for
the King hee
hath set ouer
vs.

Psalme.

Christians mea-
sure not the
veritie of reli-
gion by the
number or
greatnes of
them that are
with it or
against it.

And therefore, it should be accounted a great benefit of God, when he giues a people good and religious rulers. The Christians in the Primitiue Church, being sore troubled, by the bloody persecutions of *Nero* and *Domitian*, thought it a great benefit vnto them, when vnder *Nerua* the persecution was relented. Albeit he did not professe Christ with them, yet he did not persecute them. What then should we account of such a King, as is not onely a protector of the Church, but a professor himselfe? so farre, from persecuting Christian religion; that for professing of it, many times hath his Maiestie been persecuted to the death, but blessed be the Lord, who hath giuē many glorious deliuerances to his annointed.

Alway we learn here to arme our selues against the like tentation, if at any time it shall please the Lord to try vs with it. It was an argument the Pharisees vsed against our Lord, *Dost any of the Rulers belieue in him?* The Apostle confirms vs against it: *Brethren, yee see your calling; Not many wise men, not many noble hath God chosen, &c.* We must not haue our faith in respect of persons, nor measure religion by the authoritie of men, that are with it, or against it; but resolute with *Iosua*, Albeit all the world should forsake the Lord, yet vvee vwill worship him. No Number, no Greatnes of men, can take out of the harts of such as are truly godly, the loue of God, and of his truth.

And

And speak.] In externall actions, the first weapon wherby the wicked fight against the godly, is their tongue. Where Satan looseth their tongues to speak euill against vs, we may be sure, if hee be not restrained, he will also loose their hands to do euill. And where otherwise it falls out, that wee are persecuted by their tongues, not by their hands, let vs giue thanks to God: who as he commaunded the fire, that it could not hurt *Daniels* companions; and bridled the fury of Lions, that they could not hurt *Daniel* himselſe: ſo hee reſtraines the wicked, that they cannot do vnto vs, according to the malice of their harts.

And therefore, finding this goodneſſe of our God, wee ſhould be the more confirmed againſt the rayling of their tongues. Sith the Lord bindes their hands, ſhall wee be moued at the breath of their mouthes? or ſhal the ſtroke of their tongues put vs out of patience, which preſerues peace in our harts? But great is our weaknes. *Dauid* ſuffered this iniurie of Princes; and we cannot ſuffer it of the baſeſt people. When ſhall we be prepared for greater tentations, that will not learne to deſpiſe the ſmalleſt? *If thou be wearie in running with footmen, how ſhalt thou match thy ſelfe with horſes?*

But thy ſeruauſt.] Perceiue heere the armour by which *Dauid* fights againſt his enimie. *Arma inſiſti quibus omnes aduerſariorū repellit impetus,* are the word and prayer. Hee renders not iniurie

Such as perſecute the godly with their tongues, will not fail to looſe their hands againſt them if they may.

Where we find that God binds their hands, we ſhould beare their tongues the more patiently.



Ierem. 22.

Armour of godly men, is the word and prayer.
Ambroſe.



for iniurie; reproach for reproach. It is dangerous to fight against Satan, or his instruments, with their owne weapons: for so they shall easily ouercome vs. Let vs fight with the armour of Gods; the exercises of the word, and prayer: for a man may peaccably rest in his secret chamber; and in these two, see the miserable end of all those, who are enemies to Gods children for Gods sake.

VER. 24. *Thy testimonies are my delight, & my Counsellors.*

The word, renders vs both counsell for gouernment, & pleasure for delectation.

THe other protestation *David* makes, is of the great profit, and fruite hee had found in the vword: that it was both a delight to him, and a counsellor of him. *Saul* had his Nobles and Counsellors, by whom he ruled his affaires. *David* protests, that he had no other for the men of his counsell, but the testimonies of God. These are two great benefits, which commonly men craue: Pleasure to refresh the; Counsell to gouerne them. *David* protests hee found them both in the word: and sends all other, who would haue them, to seeke them there where he found them.

Comfort gotten by other recreations, continues not.

As for ioy and recreation of mind, commonly men seeke it in other Cisternes; but with no good successe: for as a man in a hote Feuer, is cased

eased no longer by drinking strong drinke, then he is in drinking of it; for then it seemes to coole him, but incontinent it increaseth his heat: so is it with the troubled and heauie hart, which seeks comfort in externall things; how-euer for a time they seeme to mitigate the heauinesse, they doe but increase it. Onely solid and permanent comfort must be drawne out of the fountaines of the word of G o d.

The other is wisdom: which vvithout Gods word can neuer be obtained. As *Jeremie* spake of the wicked in his time, *They haue reiected the word of God, and what wisdom then is in them?* So is it true of all the wicked: The wisdom of this world is but foolishnes. *Achitophel* his end, vvith innumerable mee, may teach all men, that hee shall neuer be found wise, who is not godlie. The beginning of wisdom, is the feare of the Lord.



No wisdom
without the
word.



DALETH.

VER. 25. *My soule cleaueth to the dust: quicken me according to thy word.*

The word of
God is conue-
nient for euery
state of life.

W Any states of life did *Dauid* change: but his hart neuer changed from the Lord, & the loue of his word. In his doubts, the word was his counsellor; in his griefs, the word was his comforter: therefore was hee not cast downe, or overcome vwith griefe. In his greatest prosperitie, the word was his greater ioy: therefore vvas hee not puffed vp with pleasure; teaching vs, that in euery state of life we shall find comfort, if we will rule our life by the word.

Dauid sore
troubled with a
spirituall op-
pression.

In this verse, *Dauid* hath a complaint; *My soule cleaueth to the dust*: And a prayer; *Quicken mee according to thy word*. The prayer, beeing well considered, shall teach vs the meaning of the complaint: that it was not as some thinke, any hard bodily estate vvhich grieved him, but a very sore spirituall oppression (as I may call it) bearing downe his soule; that where he should haue moued vp toward heauen, he was pressed

pressed downe to the earth, and was so clogged with earthly cogitations, or affections, or perturbations, that hee could not mount vp. His particular temptation hee expresseth not: for the children of God many times are in that estate, that they cannot tell their own griefs; and sometime so troubled, that it is not expedient, albeit they might, to expresse them to others.

And heereof wee learne, how that vvhich the worldling counts wisdom, to the Christian is folly: what is ioy to the one, is griefe to the other. The ioy of a vvorlbling, is to cleaue vnto the earth; when he gripes it surest, hee thinks himselfe happiest; for it is his portion: to take heed to his worldly affaires, and haue his minde vpon them (in his estimation) is onely wisdom. For the Serpents curse is vpon him, he creepes on the earth, and licks the dust all the daies of his life. This is the miserable condition of the vviicked, that euen their heauenly soule is become earthly. *Qui secundum corporis appetentiam vinit caro est, etiam anima eorum caro est*; as the Lord spake of those who perished in the Deluge, that they were but flesh, no spirit in them: that is, no spirituall or heauenly motion.

But the Christian, considering that his soule is from above, sets his affection also on those things which are above: he delights to haue his conuersation in heauen: and it is a griefe to him, when he finds his motions and affections drawne downe,

Tentations of the godly, sometimes cannot be told: sometimes it is not expedient they should be told.

In a worldling the very heauenly part is become earthly.

Ambrose.

The contrary disposition of Christians.

Ambr.

Cant. 4. 4.
The royall
towre of christ,
is a soule mou-
ting vp to hea-
uen.

Change of e-
states, where-
vnto the godly
are subiect.



and entangled with the earth. His life is to cleave to the Lord: but it is death to him, when the neck of his soule is bowed downe to the yoke of the vworld. *Erecta ad Deum cernix, & iugo Christi habilis, quia nulla in terrarum illecebras, inflexione curuetur, regalis Christi turris est.* The necke of the Spouse of the Lord I E S V S, is raysed vp toward God, meet to receiue the yoke of Christ: but wil no way bow for any earthly allurements, to beare the yoke of another; such a soule is the royall towre of Christ Iesus. By this disposition, let men try themselues, and see of what Spirit they are. Againe, the vicissitude and change of estates, where-vnto the children of God are subiect, comes heere to be marked: sometimes they are borne downe by carnall affections to the earth: sometimes raised vp by spirituall desires to the heauen. This comes to passe of the battell that is between two irreconcilable parties, the old man & the new; Nature & Grace. For as in them who wrestle with any equall strength, sometime the one is above, and sometime the other, till at length one be ouercome: so is it in this combat, In the Christian, sometime the power of Nature, other times the power of Grace preuailing: but this comfort wee haue, that at length Grace shall preuaile: & the power of corrupt Nature, shal be captiued vnder the obedience of Christ.

Quicken me.] David being sore oppressed, as I said, and dead in himselfe, doth now beseech the

the Lord to quicken him, & raise him vp againe: for he knew, that not onely the beginnings, but the continuance of our life, must come from the Lord. Thus we see how the children of God are wakened by their wants, stirred vp by their falls and decaies, to a greater seruencie in prayer. And truly, these changes of our life, which this manner of waie wakens vs, and prouokes vs to prayer, we are to account them as the mercifull hand of God, stretched out toward vs, to drawe vs home to himselfe. Let no man thinke euill of that trouble that chaseth him to the Lord. Yea, I may say, his falls, which make him more humble and seruient in prayer, are of Gods dispensation: who when he will, in most maruailous manner, can bring light out of darknes.

But seeing hee was aliue, how prayes hee that God would quicken him? I answere, The godly esteeme of life, not according to that they haue in the body, but in their soule. If the soule want the sense of mercie, and a heavenly disposition to spirituall thinges, they lament ouer it, as a dead soule: for sure it is, temporall desertions, are more heauie to the godlie then temporall death.

According thy word.] This is a great faith; that vvhether in respect of his present feeling, he found himself dead, yet he hopes for life frō God, according to his promise. Such was the faith of *Abraham*, who vnder hope, believed about hope. And

Godly men, by their wants, falls, & infirmities, become more godly.

The life of a Christiā, when it stands in it,

It is great faith to believe when there is no feeling of mercie,

truly, many times are Gods children brought to this estate, that they haue nothing to vphold them but the word of God: no sense of mercie, no spirituall disposition; but on the contrarie, great darknes, horrible feares and terrors. Onely they are sustained by looking to the promise of God, and kept in some hope, that he will restore them to life againe; because it is his praise to finish the worke which he beginnes.

VER. 26. I haue declared my waies, and thou hearest me: teach me thy statutes.

Dauid's argument to moue the Lord vnto mercie.

THis verse containes a prayer, with a reason after this forme. O Lord, I haue oft before declared vnto thee, the whole state and course of my life, my wandrings, my wants, my doubts, my griefes; I hid nothing from thee, & thou, according to my necessity didst alway hear me: therefore, now Lord, I pray thee to teach me, by thy light illuminate me that I may know thy statutes, & receiue grace to walk in the.

Where God begins to shew mercy, he ceaseth not till hee crowne with mercie.

This is a good argument in dealing with the Lord; I haue gotten many mercies, and fauourable answers from thee: therefore Lord, I pray thee to giue me mo; for whom he loues, he loues to the end; & where he begins to shew mercy, he ceaseth not till he crown his children with mercy. And so gracious is the Lord, that he esteemes hee

is honoured as oft as we giue him the praile, that we haue found comfort in him, and therefore come to seeke more. It is farre otherwise with men: if they doe vnto vs any small good, they thinke it vncourteous importunity, to require them to do any more. But as the Strand is easily emptied where the Ocean can neuer be exhausted: so mans liberality is soon dried vp; but the goodnes of the Lord remains for euer: who hath not the lesse because he hath giuen, but stil delights to giue more to such as are thankfull vnto him.

Next, is to be marked how he saith, I haue declared my wayes, and thou heardest me: these two go well together, Mercy & Truth; Truth in the heart of man confesing; Mercy in God, hearing & forgiuing: happy is the soule wherein these two meete together. Many there are who want this comfort: they cannot say, God hath heard me; and all because they deale not plainely and truly with the Lord, in declaring their waies vnto him.

For the wicked neyther will nor dare manifest heir wayes vnto the Lord. As the eye which is hurt, dare not look to the light; so the conscience of him that doth euill, dare not look to the Lord: yea, they doe what they can to hide their wayes from him, and to *conceale the iniquity of their backe*: against such the Prophet denounces a wo; *Wo to them that seeke in the deepe to hide their counsell from the Lord, their workes are in secret, and they who sees it.* Their turning of deuises, and
flying

Mans liberality is but like a Strand, Gods like the great Ocean.

Happy is the soule wherein mercy & truth meet together.

An euill conscience hides it self from God.

Esa.

What a great
benefit it is to
manifest our
wayes to God
in time.

Ambrose.

Sathan con-
founded when
we confesse our
sinnes.



A profitable
rule to make
vs liue godly.

flying to refuges of vanity, in the infidelity of their hearts, will no more auail them then the figge leaues did *Adam* to hide his nakednes; For the Lord will bring every worke to iudgement.

Better were it for vs to iudge our selues in time, and with *David* to examin our harts in our secret chamber, & to declare truly our wayes vnto the Lord (that if they be good, he would by his grace confirm vs in them; if they be euill, he would diuert vs from them) then that otherwise we should sleep securely in our sins, & tarry till our aduersary accuse vs, and the Lord enter into iudgement with vs: nay, rather let vs tell our sins our selues, that the Lord who is gracious may forgiue, and Sathan who is a most shameles and malicious accuser, may be confounded. *Qui se accusauerit, vocem parati accusatoris excludit, qui solet acerbare peccata & vniuscuiusq; exaggerare flagitia: obstruit os eius qui de seipso fuerit ante confesus;* This is the great vantage we haue by declaring our own sins to the Lord, *Qui sua delicta non tacent, videtur in se doluisse quod fecit, in diabolo prodidisse quod suasis;* that in so doing, wee shewe our selues sorrowfull, and penitent for the euill we haue done, and therewithall also become accusers of Sathan, by whole subtile instigation we did the euill.

Last of all, we learne here that then our life is well gouerned, when we declare the course of it to the Lord, & lay open our harts nakedly before him.

him. This *David* protests of himselfe, *Acta mea tibi Domine manifestavi omnia*; and in another place, that he set the Lord alway before him. And this is it which is praised in *Henoah*, that he walked with God. Happy is the man, whose wayes are so ordered, that before his actions he consults with the Lord; in his actions, he remembers the Lord; & when he hath done, presents them to the Lord: if they be good, seeking his approbation; if they be euil, seeking pardon & forgiveness of the.

Teach me thy Statutes.] Now follows his prayer, wherein he seekes light from God to direct him in his waies *Non satis est, ut confiteamur errorem; verum etiam si corrigi volumus, a Domino postulemus, ut doceat nos in iustificatione suis ne posita errare possimus*: It is not enough to confesse and declare out former errors to the Lord, but we should seeke to be corrected by his grace, in time to come. These two benefits the Lord giues them together; remission of sinnes; and renouation of their sinfull nature: and his Saints seeke them together, Mercy and Grace; Mercy for remission of former sinnes, and Grace for renouation of their hearts in time to come. And this is to be marked for carelesse and carnall professors, who seek pardon of former sinnes, but haue no care of amendment for the time to come: these abuse the mercy of God, and turne his grace into wantonnesse, seeking as it were, a libertie to sin, and not a deliuerance from sinne.

Basil.

After confession
on he ioydes
prayer for a-
mendment,
Ambros.

See ver. 12.

Remission and
renouation are
two insepara-
ble benefits.



More

More concerning this petition, see out of the twelfth Verse in the second Section *Besh.*

VER. 27. Make me to vnderstand the way of thy precepts, and I will meditate in thy wondrous workes.

We haue great need to pray for further light.

We can walke the wayes of sinne without a teacher, not so the wayes of God.

Miserable is man so long as his way and Gods way are different.

DAVID yet continues in his former supplication, for further illumination of his vnderstanding. *If the light that is in thee be darknes, how great is the darknes?* Where the mind is darkned, the heart can neuer be rightly ordered; therefore prayes he the more instantly for light vnto his minde.

The wayes of sinne, we know them, and can walke in them without a teacher: yea, man out of his owne corruption hath been the first inuenter of many sinfull waies, which before him haue not bene knowne; but as for the wayes of God, we can neyther know them nor walke in them, vnlesse we be taught of God.

Againe in this continual opposition, which he makes betweene his wayes, and Gods wayes; let vs remember, how by nature man hath a way of his own, different from the way of God. This diuision began by the first transgression, wherein man preferred the way of Sathan to the way of God: & yet the diuision continues, because man naturally is enclined to walke in a way contrary

to that which God commaunds him; which if in time it be not remedied, will not faile to bring man to a miserable and vnhappy end: for he who walkes not in the way of God, can neuer come where God is; but must be diuided frō the light & ioyes of God, and haue his portion in viter darknesse, in that lake that burneth with fire & brimstone.

And I will meditate.] If we seeke good things from God, we should seeke them for good ends, specially that we may be enabled by them to serue God; so will the Lord be intreated to giue them, when he sees we seek them that we may return them to himselfe. Ye aske, saith *S. James*, and receiue not, because ye aske amisse, that ye may consume them on your own lusts: therefore *Dauid* seeking knowledge from God, promiseth to vse it well; not as many doe, who by knowledge waxe proud, seeking knowledge to get glory to themselves. *Dauid* seeks it that he may be the more able to meditate on the workes of God, and in them to shew forth his glory.

He stiles the workes of God, maruellous workes: and so indeed they are; both his workes of creation, whereby he made the things which are; and of his administration or prouidence, whereby he conserues them: but most of all, maruellous are his workes of mans redemption; that is the *Great mysterie of godlines*. But som of them we admire not, because we know them not; others of them custom drawes in contempr.

Ver.

Good things
should be
sought from
God for good
ends.

Iam 4.

The workes of
God are all
maruellous.

VER. 28. *My soule melteth for heavinesse: raise me up according to thy Word.*

The godly sore humbled by affliction.

A Christian is eyther looking to his owne necessities, or to God his mercies.

Naturall comforts cannot sustaine a man in spirituall troubles.
1. Pet. 1.

THe meaning is, that he was sore weakened by the greatnes of his griefe; & therefore prayeth the Lord to reuiue, strengthen, & confirm him. Euen as a thing w^{ch} melteth, consumes away by picce-meale, till nothing be left; *Vires eius paulatim diffuebant sicut aqua*: so did he finde the life & strength of his soule decaying, through the extremity of his griefe.

In the first part of the verse, his eye is vpon himselfe: in the second it is vp to the Lord. Happy is the man, whose whole care is about one of these two; that eyther he is looking to himselfe, considering his necessities; or looking to the Lord, attending his mercies.

Heauiness.] There is nothing may comfort a naturall man, but *David* had it: yet cannot all these keepe him from that heavinesse, wherunto, as witnesseth St. *Peter*, the children of God are subiect in this life, through their manifold tentations. The men of the world are so farre from this disposition, that if they haue health and wealth, they maruell what it is should make a man heauie: they are not acquainted with the exercises of a feeling conscience; they know not the defects of the spirituall life, & are not grieved at them: being dead in sinne, they feele not that they

they want life: all their care is to eate and drink, and make merry. But miserable are they; for in their best estate, they are as Oxen fedde for the slaughter. *We be to them who laugh now*, they shal mourne: but blessed are they who mourne now, for they shall be comforted.

The particular causes of the heavinesse of a Christian, are according to their particular tentations; which no man is able to rehearse: where because it is a common disease to them all, that euery one of them thinkes his own tentations singular; let them remember that warning of the Apostle, *No temptation hath ouertaken you, but that which appertaines to men.*

But seeing our Saviour saith, that *His yoke is easie, and his burden light*; how is it that his children finde such heavinesse in bearing of it, and following him? It is true indeede, the burden of Christ is light: *Quidenim leuius eo onere; quod non solum non onerat, sed portat omnem euportandam imponitur?* for it is such a burden as is not burdensome, but rather bears vp euery man who bears it: not vnlike the wings of a fowle, which are so borne by the body, that they beare it, and make it more agile or light.

If then we finde any heavinesse, it is because our corrupt nature will not conforme her selfe to the similitude of Christ, and refuseth to submit her neck vnto his yoke. This is it that breeds in vs heavinesse and griefe, that wee finde a

power

Luk. 6.

Christians should not thinke that their tentations are singular.

1. Cor. 10.

Christes crosse is such a burden, as easeth them on who it beeth.

Bern Epist. 72.



If we finde it heauy, blame our corruption.

They haue not
all learned to
pray, who vse
to pray.

Rules for
prayer.

Our life should
be ordered by
the word.

power of corruption in vs, which will not subiect it selfe to him whom our soule loueth.

Raise me up according to thy word.]

They haue not all learned to pray, who vse prayer: many in this age send vp vnto God confused prayers, rising from the sense of their miseries, whereof they desire to be relieued. Pagans doe as much; when they are in trouble, they lift vp their eyes to God, and desire to be deliuered from it: But we must remember first to offer vp our prayers in the name of CHRIST; whom because Pagans know not, the Father cannot bee well pleased with them. Next, to frame our petitions according to Gods promises, as heere *Dauid* doth: otherwise, to offer prayers for that which GOD hath not promised, or are not according to the word, it is to offer vncouth fire to the Lorde, as *Chore*, *Dathan* and *Abiram* did, to their owne destruction.

VER. 29. *Take from me the way of lying, and graciously grant me thy Lawe.*

IN the remanent foure Verses of this Section, there is a continued praier; wherein *Dauid* craueth grace of God to order his life: not according to the counsell of Nature, which is a lying way; but according to the word, which he onely
acknow-

acknowledgeth to be the way of truth, adding these protestations: that he had chosen it; his hart cleaved to it; and he would continue in it.

In this Verse, we haue first to see what is this way of lying, that we may vnderstand the meaning of his petition. By the way of lying is to be vnderstood all that is in man his nature, not agreeable to the word, whether it be counsels, or conclusions of the heart, or externall actions: and it is called a lying way, because nature promises a good to be gotten by sinne, which man shall not finde in it.

And vnto this deceit of sinne *Dauid* acknowledgeth himselfe subiect with the rest; for why? he would not pray the Lord to take that away from him, which were not in him. *In nobis est, & interius manet via iniquitatis, ideoq; studiose agendum est, vt eam à nobis separemus.* *Dauid* was a regenerate man; but there are none so well renewed in this life, who may not finde something in themselves that need further reformation: *Sed quia hereditarium iniquitatis glutinum mentibus inhaesit humanis, opus est liberantis auxilio:* but this separation of a man from the way of iniquitie, is a worke of great difficulty, to be done only by the power of God, both because the way of sinne is within vs, and as an heritable euil is glewed to our minds. For as it is *Maiorum nostrorum attrita vestigijs*, pathed and trod with the foote-steps of our fathers; so are wee naturally enclined

All the wayes
of sinne are
long wayes.

The deceitfull
way of sinne is
within euery
man by nature.

Amb.

It is a worke of
Gods power to
separate vs
from it.

Euery sight a
godly man
gets of him-
selfe, is a spurre
to prayer.

The law of
God, the way
of truth in
three respects.

1.

2.



3.

ned without a teacher or counsellor, to follow them in it. *Ideo que quia vulnus grande ac vetus est, & diu serpens, perfectioris medicina remedia deponit.* And therefore, because it is a great wound & an old, it requires the remedie of more perfect medicine, then the wit or power of man is able to afford: which *Dauid* vvell knowing, beseecheth God of his mercie to take away this euill from him.

And further we see heere, that what-euer vvas *Dauid* his disposition, hee gathers alwaies out of it, an argument to mooue him to prayer. It is wisdom for a man, about all things to take heed to himselfe. But sure, hee hath neuer learned this aright, who when hee hath looked to himselfe, lookes not incontinent vp to God; moued with the sight of his manifold necessities, to seek mercie and grace to supply them.

And grant mee graciously thy law.] Hee opposes the law of God, to the way of lying. First, because it is the onely rule of all truth, both in religion and manners: that which is not agreeable to it, is but a lye, vvhich shall deceiue men. Secondly, it destroyes, and shall at length vtterlie destroy all contrary errors. As the rodde of *Aaron*, deuoured the rods of the Enchaunters: so the word, which is the rodde of the mouth of God, shall in the end, eate vp and consume all vntruthes whatsoeuer. Thirdly, according to the sentence of this vvord, so shall it be vnto euerie man;

man ; it deceiues none. Men shall find by experience it is true : he who walkes in a way condemned by the word, shall come to a miserable end. And on the contrary, it cannot be but well vvith them who liue according to this rule; *Non est via veritatis honor saculi, sollicitudo mundi: vanitas temporalium est, veritas aeternorum.*

But had not *Dauid* the law already? No doubt he wanted not the booke of the law. Hee heard it, he read it, he professed it: yea, some-way hee vnderstood it. What then is it hee craues? Surely, that the law might be so imprinted in his hart, that it might abolish that naturall vanitie, and deceit of sinne, which carried him to the offence of God. A necessary petition for these dayes: vvherin the knowledge of the word is exceeding great; but the zeale, spirituall life, and feeling of the harts of men is not answerable vnto it. They thinke all is vvell, in that publicquely they profess it. They hear it with their cares; they speak of it with their mouthes; they read it in their bookes finely bound; though in that dutie many faile also. But certainly, vvhen they thinke they haue it, they want it; so long as it is not printed in the table of their hart, to frame their motions, affections and actions conformable to it. And this is it which *Dauid* heere craues.

Amb.

Then haue we learned Gods law, when it is written in the table of our hart.

A warning to the professors of this age.

VER. 30. *I haue chosen the way of truth : and thy iudgements haue I laid before me.*

If we haue not good purpose: and desires, let vs not looke that God will blesse vs.

And yet good purposes haue we not till God by grace work them in vs.

Aug. de dono persequer. ca. 13.



IN these last three verses we haue the reason of his former petition, from his honest affection toward the word of God : wherein he declares that he had chosen it, he did cleaue vnto it, and was determined in al time to-com more and more to cleaue vnto it; therefore praith he God more and more to confirme him in this purpose. *Non enim diuina gratia datur bonū propositū non habentibus*, the grace of God, is not giuen to such as in their heart purpose not to do good : and yet this purpose and desire to doe well is not in the heart of man by nature, vnlesse God worke it by grace; for we are not of our selues sufficient to think a good thought : *It is God who works in vs, both the will and the deed. Nos volumus, sed Deus operatur in nobis, & velle : nos operamur, sed Deus in nobis operatur, & operari; hoc nobis expedit & credere, & dicere : hoc pium, hoc verum; ut sit humilis & submissa confessio, & detur totum Deo.* We will indeede; but it is God, who workes in vs that will also; we worke; but it is God who workes in vs that working of good also; it is expedient for vs both to belecue and to say so : this is godly, this is true; that there may be in vs a submisfe and humble confelsion, & the whole prais of wel-doing may be ascribd to God.

And

And because man is ingenious to defraud God of the praise of grace, and to magnifie the arme of Nature, let vs marke another notable testimonie this same Father giues to this truth, whereby the idle distinctions of the Aduersaries are dissolved; *Deus qui lux est interioris hominis plus illi praeſtat, quam lux oculo: nam lux oculum ad se conuerſum illuminat, auerſum à ſe, & clauſum deſerit; Deus vero non ſolum mentem ad ſe conuerſum illuminat, ſed etiam mentem ad ſe conuerſit, quod lux oculo non praeſtat:* GOD who is the light of the inward man, doth more to him, then the light doth to the externall eye: for the light illuminates the eye that lookes vnto it, but forſakes the eye which is cloſed and turned from it. But the Lord doth not onely illuminate the mind conuerted to him, but he alſo conuerſes the mind vnto him. Which thing the light cannot doe to the eye. *Diligenter itaque notanda ſunt haec loquutiones in ſcripturis, Conuertimini ad me: & cum his comparanda, Conuerte nos Deus ſanctum noſtrum; ne putemus libero arbitrio nos ad Deum conuerſi.* Wee haue diligently therefore to obſerue theſe manner of ſpeeches in the Scripture, wherein God commaunds vs to conuert to him: and to compare them with others, wherein we are taught to pray, that the God of our ſaluation would conuert vs, and then ſhall wee be conuerted; leaſt otherwiſe, wee thinke that wee conuert to God of our owne free will.

Another notable testimony of *Augustine*, to proue that our good desires are of grace, and not of the power of nature. *Aug. contra Pelag. lib. 2. cap. 5.*



Conuerſion to God, is not of any free will in nature.

Our election
of Gods word,
proceeds from
his election of
vs.

What great
comfort they
haue, who sin-
cerely loue the
Lord.

How far Gods
loue is aboue
ours.



Esay.

Gods word
called his
iudgement,
and why.

This choise which *Dauid* makes here of Gods truth, proceeds from that choise and election, vvhcreby the Lord before all time made choise of *Dauid*, in Christ, to be one of his Elect. For as it is true of loue; *Heerein is loue, not that wee loued God first, but that he loued vs*: vvec could neuer haue loued him, if first he had not loued vs: so is it true of election; if he before time had not chosen vs to be his people, wee could neuer in time haue chosen him to be our God. And this I mark in them vvhio loue the word of God, & delight in it, who can say out of a good heart that the Lord is their portion, and the ioy of their hart: this is a sure seale of their election, imprinted by the finger of God in their hearts; assuring them, that what they are in loue and affection toward him, that hath he been first toward them: and so much the more abundant in his loue toward vs, as he him selfe is greater then we. What is the eye to the sunne? vvhath is the Well to the Ocean? what is the earth to the heauen? By infinite degrees is man lesse then his Maker; and as farre our loue and affection to him, inferiour to his loue & affection toward vs. *As far as the heauens are aboue the earth: so far are my thoughts aboue yours, saith the Lord.* This doth some-vvhat shadow it: but how far his thoughts are aboue ours, no similitude can expresse it.

And thy iudgements.] Gods word is called his iudgement, because it discernes good from euill, and

and is not a naked sentence: but as it points out euill, so it pronounceth plagues against it; vvhich shall be executed according to the sentence thereof. The remembrance of this, serued as an awband to keepe *Dauid* from sinne; and shall keepe vs also, if as saith he, *Psal. 16. wee set the Lord still in our sight*: and if, as heere he doth, we lay his iudgements before vs.

VER. 31. *I haue cleaued to thy testimonies: O Lord, confound me not.*

THe protestation of his former affection, is amplified by this; that as he had once chosen the testimonies of God: so by a constant affection hee cleaued vnto them. *Dauid* was not a Temporizer; to make choise of the word this day, and reiect it to morrow: as were those Iewes, who for a time reioyced in the light of the Gospel, brought to them by the Baptist, and after reiected his testimonie.

True godlinesse, wants neuer vpon her head the garland of perscuerance: where the hypocrisie of temporizers, who make a shew of beginning in the spirit, and end in the flesh, is expressed by our Sauior, by corn which springs, & shooteth to the blade, but grows not to perfection, because it was neuer well rooted. And *Basil* compares these, *qui bene ceperunt, & nō perscuerarūt*, who

Constancie in
godlinesse, an
effect of grace.

True godlines,
wants neuer
the crowne of
perscuerance.

*Basil in princip.
Preuerb.*

Confusion,
which godly
men feare, is
either defection
of God,

Or contempt
and oppression
of men,

No constrain-
ned, but cheer-
full seruice
pleaseth the
Lord.

begins well, but continues not, to vnhappy passengers, *qui naufragium prope portum patiuntur*: vvhoe suffer shipwracke, not farre from the harbour.

Confound me not.] Forasmuch as *Dauid*, in a good conscience, endeoured to serue God, hee craues that the Lord would not confound him. This is two waies done: either when the Lord forsakes his children, so that in their trouble, they feelee not his promised comforts; and then great confusion of mind & perturbation is vpon them: or otherwise, when hee leaues them as a prey to their enemies, who scorne them for their godly and sincere life, and insult ouer them in time of their trouble; when they see, that all their prayer, and other exercises of religion, cannot keepe them out of their enemies hands. *Hee trusted in God, let him deliuer him.* From this shame and contempt, he desires the Lord would keep him; and that he should neuer be like vnto them, who being disappointed of that wherein they trusted, are ashamed.

VER. 32. *I will run the way of thy cōmandements, when thou shalt enlarge mine heart.*

HIs affection toward the word of God, is yet further amplified by this; that as in time past hee had cleaued to it: so hee promi-

promiseth with ioy & alacritie to continue in it for the time to come; which he expresseth by the word of running. But hee adds this protestation, or rather condition; that the Lord would enlarge his hart: without which grace, hee grants he can make no progresse in the way of godlines.

Heereof wee learne, how wee should doe the will of God, not by constraint, but cheerfullie, & willingly: as one that runneth a race, intends the whole force of his body to aduance himselfe forward, toward the end thereof.

But heere we may stand and lament; Alas, we runne not with *Dauid*; oh that we could halt to *Canaan* with *Jacob*; or at least, creep forward like children, to our fathers house. But many, in steed of running, lie downe; and which is worse, goe backe againe, like dogges to their vomits; or carnall Israelites, to their flesh-pots of Egypt: for whom it had beene better, not to haue knowne the way of righteousness.

Better not to
begin then to
breake off the
course of god-
linesse.

H E.



H E.

VER. 33. Teach mee, O Lord, the way of thy statutes: and I will keepe it to the end.

Our life is a
race, & a rest-
lesse battell.



HE life of man is compared by the Apostle, to a race; wherein all must run that looke to obtaine the high prize of the calling of God: and so run, that all the way they must fight with sundry aduersaries, that stand vp against them. There must be no declyning, neither to the right hand, nor to the left: but as souldiers direct their way according to the commandement of their Imperator, *Non ipsi pro suo arbitrio viam carpunt, nec voluntaria captant compendia, ne à signis recedant*: so must it be with Christians; we should stedfastlie looke to I E S V S, the authour and finisher of our faith: who for the ioy set before him, despised the Crosse, and endured shame: let vs remember, our life should be a following of him. As Israel, in the vvildernesse, remooued, or remained according as they were directed by the clowde in the day, and pillar of fire in the night: so should all the vvaies of our life, be ordered by the direction

Ambr.
In it we should
follow the di-
rection of our
Captaine.
Heb. 12.

of

of God. Otherwise, as the vvarriour, *qui praescripto non incedit ordine, armatus non ambulat, rectaque via iter non conficit, mansionem paratam non invenit*; who walkes not the way prescribed to him, and goes not into it armed to resist the enemy, comes not to that mansion prepared by the Emperor for his followers, to enioy such furniture, as he hath caused to provide for them: so shall it be with the straggling Christian, vvwhose vway is a declining from Christ; he cannot come to those mansions, which hee hath provided for his followers, in his Fathers house; nor be refreshed with his delicates. *David* knew this very well: and therefore is he so inquisitiue to knowe the way of his Commaunder, and earnest to seek grace, that he may walke in it.

David, as wee said before, was a Prophet, indued vvith great vnderstanding; yet doth hee earnestlie desire to be further taught of God: for the treasures of manifold wisdom locked vp in the word, are so rich, that no man can attaine to such measure of knowledge, but still hee hath neede to learne more. The Angels, vvwho are full of eyes vvithin & vvithout, so figured for the greatnesse of their vnderstanding (for which also by *Naxianzen*, they are called, *Secundaria lumina*) are scholars in the schoole of the Church: for those things which are preached to vs in the Gospel by the holy Ghost, sent down frō heauen, *The Angels desire to behold*; and shal we not delight to learne

The losse of such as walke not, and fight not by direction of their Lord.

The wisdom of Gods booke can neuer bee sufficiently learned.

Naxian.
Angels are scholars in the schoole of the Church: & shal we think euill of it?
1. Peter 1.



If God continue our teacher, we shall continue his servants.
Psalm.

Perseuerance is of Gods grace.

Wisdom shold be sought from the most wise God.

learne with the, seeing for our saluation (whereof they are sure already) these things are preached?

And I will keepe it vnto the end. Here is a promise of thankfulness, not in word, but in deede. *Quemadmodum legem tuam seruare studui prosequar hunc cursum, neque fatigabor in medio itinere ubi tu perrexeris me docere.* If thou continue a teacher of mee, saith *Danid*, I shall continue a seruant to thee. Perseuerance cannot bee, vnlesse continuall light and grace be furnished to vs from the Lord. As the tree which hath not sap at the roote, may flourish, but cannot continue: so a man, whose hart is not watered with the dew of Gods grace continually, may for a time make a faire shew of godliness, but in the end, shall fall away. Wee beare not the roote, but the roote beares vs: let vs tremble and feare. If wee abide not in him, we become withered branches, good for nothing but the fire. Let vs alway pray, that hee would euer abide with vs, to informe vs by his light, and lead vs by his power, in that vway which may bring vs to him.

VER. 34. Giue me vnderstanding, and I wil keepe thy law: yea, I wil keep it with mine whole hart.

Here followes a prayer agreeable to this purpose; with a promise of thankfulness repeated & amplified. Whē God appeared to

to *Salomon* in a vision, and offered to giue vnto him whatsoeuer he would aske; *Salomon* as hee had learned here from *Dauid* his father, seekes a wise and vnderstanding heart: which thing so pleased the Lord, that because *Salomon* did so, and sought not riches nor honour, the Lord promised not onely to giue him wisdome, which he sought, but riches and honour which he sought not. Let vs also be moued, if we be the sonnes of *Dauid*, to seeke best things from the Lord our God, specially knowledge & vnderstanding how we may serue him. Certainly so great and gracious is the Lord, so rich in mercy, that then our prayers are most acceptable to him, when we seeke most excellent blessings from him.

And I will keepe thy Lawe.] True vnderstanding rests not in speculation, but breakes out in practise. Naked knowledge breeds conuiction; it were better to want it: for greater knowledge makes the iudgement of the wicked greater, because that *when they knew God, they glorified him not*. But true vnderstanding changes the heart; for by it not only do we behold the glory of God, as in the mirror of his word, but *are changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the spirit of the Lord*. And this is that excellent knowledge of Christ, wherein the Apostle reioyes, to *know the vertue of his resurrection, the fellowship of his afflictions, and bee made conformable to his death*. And indeede then onely is knowledge

a

We are most welcome to God, when we seeke greatest gifts from him.

Knowledge which reforms not is dangerous.

2. Cor. 3. 17.

Phil 3.

True godlines
with perseu-
rance, hath
sinceritie.

Any good wee
doe, is from
God.
1. Chron. 29.



Dauid no pre-
sumptuous
boaster.
Phil. 1.
See ver. 10.

a blessing, when it workes these happy effects in vs.

Yea, I will keepe it with mine whole hart.] As he promised before perseuerance in Gods seruice; so now he promiseth sinceritie. Some are temporizers in Religion; these perseuer not in seruice. Some are hypocrites; these are not sincere: they draw neere the Lord with their lippes, but are from him in their harts. *Dauid* promiseth both perseuerance, & sinceritie; but so, that stil he craues grace of God to performe the. When *Dauid* offred materials, as gold & siluer for building of the Temple, he blessed the Lord, & ascribed to him the praise, both of the things which hee had offred (they were Gods own) & of the hart whereby he offred them. *Now therefore, my God, wee thank thee, and praise thy glorious Name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee: and of thy owne hand haue wee giuen thee.* But how much more should we acknowledge this in spirituall graces? *Haue wee any thing that we haue not receiued?* And when we doe any good by his grace, should not the praise be returned vnto him? Yea indeed, let vs all say with *Dauid*, all comes of thee, and of thine owne hand haue we giuen vnto thee.

And where hee promiseth that hee will keepe Gods law with his whole hart; it is not a presuming of perfection: *Not as though I were alreadie perfect,*

perfect; but a protesting of his sinceritie, that he had not the false & diuided hart of hypocrites.

VER. 35. *Direct mee in the path of thy commaundements: for therein is my delight.*

AS before hee craued light to his mind: so now he craues grace to direct his heart, that he may follow it. Naturally, man is ignorant of the way to eternall life: and if any light or knowledge he haue of it, yet is he easily miscaried to wander from it. Euen as vvater, if it be not walled in, *ad declinia fertur*; of it ovvne nature declines to lowest places, if the smallest passage be made vnto it: *Ita & humana natura diabolo viam ad peccatum aperiente, ad id quod peius est prouit*: so the nature of man rushes downeward to sinne, vvhen any way thereto is opened to him by Satan. And therefore *Dauid*, fearing his owne infirmitie, prayes so earnestlie that God would guide him, and not leaue him to himselfe.

Now the way vvwhich *Dauid* chooseth to walk in, is the path of **G O D S** commaundements: not anie new vvay; but the old, and pathed vvay vvherein all the seruants of **G O D** haue vvalked before him: and for vvwhich, the *Græcians* (as *Euthymius* noteth) called it *τρίβος*, *quasi viam tritam*. But how-so-euer this vvay bee pathed, by the vvalking and treading

It is not enough for vs to haue light; we haue also need that God be our director to walke after it.

Basil.

The narrow way that leads to heauen.

Euthym.

of

The broad
way that leads
to hell.

Our guide in
the way is Ie-
sus, and how
we should fol-
low him.

of many in it, yet he acknowledgeth it is but one, yea, and a narrow and diffi-
cil path to keepe; and therefore
seekes he to be guided into it. As
to the broad way there are many
rodes and pathed wayes into it,
although they meet all in one end:
all men goe not to hell by one way;
for we see many men abhorring a
sinne in others, who yet intertaine
a farre more odious sin in themselves:
but the narrow way that leades to
heaven, hath but one path or road
into it, from which if we decline,
we fall incontinent into some
roade of the broad way that leads
to hell.

Let vs therfore vvalke circumspectly,
considering our naturall disposition
to decline, and the dangers and
difficulties of the vway: let vs wait
vpon our guide, and follow his
foot-steps. *Prædixit Christus ut
sequamur nos*: hee hath gone
before, that we should follow; he
fasted and prayed, to traine vs
vp in the like exercises; he suffred,
to learne vs patience: *Ascendit
Crucem, ut doceret mortem non
esse metuendam*; he went vp to the
Crosse, that he might teach vs
death is not to be feared. By this
way of innocence, holinesse,
humility, patience, contempt of
death, let vs follow our guide,
nothing doubting but this path
shall lead vs to his Paradise.

For therein is my delight. Of this see Verse 47.

Vcr.

VER. 36. *Incline mine heart vnto thy Testimonies; and not to conetousnes.*

THis prayer, among the rest, no doubt flowed out of *Dauid* his sense: hee found his hart euill inclined, at least tempted to bow a wrong way. For we stand betweene two parties that seek vs: the one for our weale, the other for our wrack. The Lord on the one hand allures vs; *My sonne, giue mee thine hart*: and offers vs more for it then wee, yea, or tenne thousand worlds can be woorth; *and I shall be thy portion*. On the other hand, Satan the deceiuer, by faire, but false allurements, seeks to haue our hart drawne after him. Happy is the man can consider this; that hee may offer his hart to the Lord, and seeke it as a grace, as heere *Dauid* doth.

Vnto thy testimonies.] Gods word is called his testimonie; because in it hee testifieth his vwill, concerning his worship, and our saluation: and witnesseth also, how he is affected to euery man. For out of it, to some men he speaks as a louing Father: to others, as a feareful Iudge. Men neede not runne vp to Gods secret counsell, to enquire how hee is affected toward them: if they list, they may learne it out of his word.

But, as *Achab* desired not to hear *Michaiab*, because hee prophecied not good thinges vnto him: so many novv, because they doe euill,

G

can

Man stands between two Suters, that seeke him: happy are wee, if we incline to the best.



Miserable are they, to whom the good word of God testifies euill tydings.

Mich.

Courteousnes a
vile sinne.Why a Christi-
an should take
heed how he
lookes with his
eyes.Three things
requisite to
keep the hart.

can not abide the light of the word: they find noioy in the hearing of it, but are stricken vvith feare and trembling; as *Felix* was at the hearing of *Paul*. But in truth the blame is in thy self. *Are not my wordes good to him that walks vprightlie? saith the Lord.* No doubt, if thou wert good thy selfe, the word of the Lord should testifie good things vnto thee.

And not to couetousnes.] Hce prayes in particular, that his hart may be diuerted from couetousnes; which is not only an euil, but as saith the Apostle, *The roote of all euill.* *Dauid* heere op-
pones it as an aduersarie to all the righteousnesse of Gods testimonies: it inverts the order of Nature, and makes the heavenly soule earthlie. It is a hand-maid of all sinnes; for there is no sinne which a couetous man wil not serue for his gaine. We should beware of all sinnes, but speciallie of mother sinnes.

VER. 37. *Turne away mine eyes from regarding vanitie; and quicken me in thy way.*

HAuing prayed for his hart, now he praieth for his eyes also: *Omnia à Deo petit, docens illum omnia efficere.* By the eyes oftentimes, as by windowes, death enters into the hart: therefore, to keepe the hart in a good estate, three things are requisite. First, a careful custody

body of the senses, specially of the eyes: for it is a righteous working of the Lord, *Vt qui exteriori oculo negligenter utitur, interiori non iniuste cecatur*; that he who negligently useth the externall eye of his body, shold be punished with blindness in the internal eye of his mind. And for this cause, *Nazianzen*, deploring the calamities of his soule, wished that a dore might be set before his eyes & eares, to close them when they opened to anie thing that is not good; *Malis autem sua sponte utrumque clauderetur*. The second thing is, a subduing of the body by discipline. And the third is, continuance in prayer.

Euery creature of God is good: and the beholding thereof, should waken in vs an affection to praise God. *Oculi idcirco dati sunt corpori, ut per eos intueamur creaturam, ac per huiusmodi mirabilem harmoniam agnoscamus opificem*: for this cause were eyes giuen to the body, that by them we might looke to the creature, and by the maruailous harmony which is among thē, we might learne to know the Creator. But since the fal, the creature also is become subiect to vanitie: in euery one of them hath the Serpent laid his decciuable snare to entrap man, and steale his affection from God: so that now, *Inter tot passiones huius corporis, inter tantas illecebras huius seculi, difficile est intum, & intemeratum seruare vestigium*: in the midst of so many palsions, of so many allurements of this world, it is a difficile

Gregor. in Iob. lib. 2.

Nazian.

Euery creature we see, should waken vs to praise God.
Athanas. contra Gent.



But corrupt nature makes them snares to intangle vs.
Ambrose.

thing to walke, and not to be snared. Hee that lookes on a woman, saith our Saviour, and lusts after her, hath committed adultery. Behold in how short a time great guiltinesse is committed. *Male sic vidit oculus: videat ergo & fungatur suo munere; non lubrica mentis imperio dirigatur ad lapsum, ut vitiū referat pro officio.* David knew this, hee found the euill of it by experience: let vs learn of him to watch ouer our eyes, that we may keepe the hart the better.

Naturall man quick enough to works of sin, but dead to works of pietie.

Quicken mee in thy way.] Man by nature is quick enough to walke in his owne waies; and the works of nature, he can doe them without a teacher: but vnlesse the Lord put life in him, & keepe life in his soule, quickning him at all occasions, hee hath neither knowledge, nor strength, nor pleasure to walke in the waies of God. Of this petition, see ver. 88. 145.

VER. 38. *Stablisth thy promise to thy seruant, because hee feares thee.*

Gods promises are sure in themselves: but it is a great point to make them sure vnto vs.

HEere is a prayer, with a reason. The prayer is, that God would make sure his promise to *David*. The meaning is, I knowe o Lord, that thy promise is sure enough in it selfe, but I pray thee make it sure to me. Sure it is, the promises of God are most certaine, the earth may mooue, and mountaines may fall: yea, the earth at length shal be shaken, and

and the heauens wimpled vp like a garment; but one ior of the word of G o d shall not faile. This is the maine poynt, vvhercat in all our life vvee should aime, To make sure our calling, & election; that the promises of God, most sure in themselves, may be made sure vnto vs.

Many waies hath G o d confirmed his promise to vs: First, by the blood of his sonne. Next, by his owne oath: he hath not onely spoken that he will giue mercie to the penitent believer; but hee hath sworne it, *that by two immutable things, wherein it is impossible that hee should lie, he might shew to the heires of promise, the stabilitie of his counsell.* But for all this, neuer is his promise sure vnto vs, till we receiue the seale of the spirit of adoption. For this let vs pray.

For so long as we are in this body of sinne, our infidelitie will euer be sending out feares, and doubtings, and distrusts; against vvhich, vvee haue neede to pray the Lord alwaies to confirme vs. *Omnes enim Dei benignitate indigemus, et qui extremum consequutus est virtutis apicem hac indiget continuo.* No man hath made such progresse in faith, but hee hath neede further to be confirmed: *Lord increase our faith: Lord helpe our vnbeliefe.* And therefore, let not our wants and great weakenesse driue vs to despaire; but so much the more vvaken and prouoke vs to frequent prayer.

To thy seruant.] Dauid frequently vscth this

Many confirmations of Gods promises haue wee.

Hebr. 6.

To remedy our naturall infidelitie.

Basil.

It is an honourable stile to be called Gods seruaunt.

Amirafe.

He that feares and loues the Lord, may boldly seeke grace fro him.

Gods promises are conditionall: if wee haue not the condition, we haue no interest in the promise.

Stile as very honourable: and indeed so it is. The seruaunt of God onely is a free man, yea, and a King; but hee who is not the Lords seruaunt, though hee were a Monarch, and ruler of the whole earth, he is but Satans captiue, and a seruaunt of seruaunts. *O quam multos Dominos habet, qui vnum non habet!*

Because hee feares thee.] Hee who hath receiued from the Lord grace to feare him with loue, may be bold to seeke any necessary good thing from him; because the feare of GOD hath annexed the promises of all other blessings vwith it.

Sometime, *Dauid* brings the reason of his petition from the Lord; as from his mercy, or his truth: sometime from himselfe; as from this that hee trusts in the Lord, ver. 42: or that hee hath a great desire toward the Lord, ver. 40: or that he feares God; as heere. All the promises of God are conditionall: if the condition bee no way in vs, how shall the promise be performed vnto vs? It is true, the Lord is gracious & mercifull, readie to forgiue, &c. But what is that to thee, who repentst not, belieuest him not, louest him not, and trustest not in him?

VER. 39. *Take away my rebuke, that I feare: for thy iudgements are good.*

T Here is a rebuke which comes vpon the godly, from men, without a cause: and this, suppose it grieue the godly, yet they feare it not, but rather reioyce in it, according to that of our Sauour; *Blessed are yee when men reuile you, and speake all manner euill of you for my names sake: be glad and reioyce, for great is your reward in heauen.* With this meditation did *Augustine* confirme himselfe, against the detractions of his Aduersarie, who sought to empaire the credit of his name: *Quisquis volens detrahit famam meam, nolens addit mercedem meam:* Hee that willingly would empaire my name, against his will increaseth my reward. And *Dauid* glorieth in this, that the rebukes of them, who rebuked the Lord, had fallen vpon him.

There is againe a rebuke and shame comming from God, as the fruite and iust punishment of sin; & for this the godly are afraid: if they looke to their begun sinnes, they know they haue deserved it; they feare it, and therefore pray vwith *Dauid*, Psalmo 6. *Lord rebuke mee not in thine anger.* If againe they looke to the time to come, they feare, least their infirmities bring them to

Rebukes of men, how to be borne.

Mat. 5.

August.

The rebukes of God, how they are to be eschewed.

A godly man
is more afraid
for sinne that
he may do, then
the wicked is
for sinne hee
hath done.



David afraid of
Gods rebuke,
not of mans.

shame, euery one of them according to their seuerall tentations. And this also they preuent by prayer; as heere *David* doth.

For it is to be marked, that a godlie man is more afraid for sinnes vvhich hee may doe, then a vvhicked man is for sinnes that he hath done: as hee liues in a continuall sorrow for begun sinnes, so also in a continuall feare of sinnes wherein he may fall. *Semper est in dolore et tremore*: the one for repenting of sinne; the other for preuenting of sinne.

For thy iudgements are good. } This reason heere subioyned, declares that the rebuke which he feared, was Gods rebuke. The meaning is; As to man his iudgement, it is so peruerse, that I passe not for it at all: I knowe hee condemnes vvhether thou wilt absolue. It is high many a time in mans eye, vvhich is abhomination to thee: but as to thy rebuke, I know Lord it comes neuer vnderdeserued; for thy iudgement is good. And therefore prayes he, that the Lord vvhould keepe him from those sinnes which may bring shame and reproach vpon him.

VER. 40. *Behold, I desire thy commandments:
quicken me in thy righteousness.*

Sometime he confesseth his naturall inclination to euill, as yee may see out of his prayers, in the verses preceding; sometime his new disposition by grace, vnto that which is good. The children of God finde in themselves motions of sinne, but not without motions of grace to restrain them; the one fights against the other: and in this battell are we militant here vpon earth; let vs mourne for the one, and giue thanks for the other with the Apostle, *Rom. 7.*

He offers his desires to the Lord to be looked vpon. It is an argument of a well set, and disposed heart, when a man dare present it vnto the Lord, that hee may looke vpon the desires and intencion thereof. A euill conscience dare not doe this: for as an eye, when it is hurt, craues some couering to hide it from the light; so the guiltie conscience flies from the Lord, and hath no desire to come before him: let vs refuse to liue in that course of life, wherein we dare not be bold to looke to the Lord, nor content that he should looke vnto vs.

I desire. Our perfection in this life is rather in godly desires, then in a full obtayning of things desired, *Phil. 3.* yet haue the godly this comfort; that where desires goe before, satisfaction

Motions of sin
in the godly
are not without
motions of
grace.

It is a good
heart which
dares present it
selfe to the
Lord.

Our perfection
in this life is
rather in desires
then in deeds.

Matth. 7.

Satisfaction
shall follow de-
sires, and God
shall giue vs
more then we
desired.

1. Cor. 2.

God accepts
from his chil-
dren a will for
a deed.

As the godly
desire mercie,
so they vse the
meanes.

1. Ioh. 3.

Eden shall follow : for the Lord hath promised to fulfill the desires of them that feare him ; *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied* : yea, sure it is, how great soeuer our desires be, we cannot desire so much as the Lord hath to giue vs ; for he is rich in mercy, able to doe abundantly, *above all that we can aske or thinke*. Example hereof we haue in *Zaccheus* ; he desired but to see Christ, and hee got not onely a sight of him, but familiar speech of him : yea, Christ went to his house and dined with him, and made him by grace the childe of *Abraham*. So shall the Lord do to all his children ; he shall giue them more then cyther they desired or looked for at his hands : *For the heart cannot understand those things, which God hath prepared for them that loue him*.

Thy commandments.] He saith not I haue done thy commandments ; but, I desire to do them. Let this serue as a Commentarie to other places, wherein he makes protestation of his begun obedience : so gracious is the Lord, that in his children he accepts their will for a deed.

There is no man so wicked but he desires mercie : but the godly doe so desire mercie, that first they desire the way to mercie. They know, that *without sanctification no man can see the Lord* ; therefore all their care is to *purge themselves, euen as God is pure* : as here ye see for this end *Dauid* prayeth for the grace of obedience. It was a preposterous

posterior desire of *Balaam*, who wished the death of the righteous, and would not live the life of the righteous: no better are the desires of wicked men.

Quicken me.] He acknowledgeth that his desires were nothing, vnlesse the Lord gaue him life. As a false conception, which euansheth and comes not to the birth; so is the desire of man, not quickned nor continued by the grace of God. More of this see ver. 149. 159.

Not so to the wicked.

Desires without grace are like a false conception.

V A V.



V A V.

VER. 4. I. *And let thy louing kindnesse come vnto me, O Lord; and thy saluation, according to thy promise.*

The feruent
prayer of Da-
uid may make
vs ashamed.



Ut of this Psalme we see how feruent, and continuall *Dauid* was in prayer. Every third Verse hee turnes him to prayer. No maruell he was enriched with a great measure of spirituall grace: for hee sought it diligently. Not like the colde professors of our time, to whom a colde morning prayer is sufficient for the whole day; and of that also oftentimes they are weary before they haue done it. A lamentable euill, that hauing all good for the seeking, yet we should not seeke.

Four notable
motiues to
make vs more
earnest and di-
ligent in pray-
er.



If we would consider how many sinnes we haue contracted, which we must craue to be forgiven, & would offer vp but one supplication for euery one of them: and againe, that albeit all our sinnes vvere presently forgiven, yet how readily should we fall into new sinnes, if we get no grace daily to reforme vs: and thirdly, how diffical a thing it is, against so many strong enemies,

mies, as Principalities, Powers, and spiritual wickednes, which with restlesse tentations pursue vs vpon the right hand, & the left, to enter through them all into the kingdome of God : and lastly, how our time is short ; and when it is done, no more place of supplication will be left vnto vs: If all these, with many moe, wee did consider, they would waken in vs a more earnest care, to call vpon our God, while we haue time.

This whole section consists of petitions and promises. Petitions are two, ver. 41. 43. Promises are six. This, among many, is a difference betweene godly men and others: all men seeke from God: but the wicked so seeke that they giue him nothing backe againe; nor yet wil promise in sinceritie to giue. Their prayers must be vnprofitable, because they proceed from loue of themselves, and not of the Lord. If so be they obaine that which is for their necessitie, they haue no regard to giue to the Lord, that which is for his glory: but the godly, as they seek, so they giue praise to God when they haue gotten; and returne the vse of things receiued, to the glorie of God who gaue them. They loue not themselves, for themselves, but for the Lord: vwhat they seeke from him, they seeke it for this end, that they may be the more able to serue him. Let vs take heed vnto it; because this is a cleere token, whereby such as are truly religious, are distinguished from counterfet dissemblers.

It is not enough to seeke from God, wee must also promise to giue him.

A triall of men truly religious, from counterfet.



The kindnes
of God, euer
brings saluatiō.

But man may
be kind where
he is not able
to helpe.

As comfort
should besought
from God, so
for Gods sake
onely.

Papists repro-
ued.

Let thy louing kindnes, &c.] In his first prayer he ioynes these two, Gods louing kindnes, and his saluation: and so it is, they goe together inseparably. As for the kindnes of man, thou maist haue it, and not be the better for it: the friend may loue his friend, and not be able to help him; yea, the Father may looke with compassion vpon his child in danger, and not be able to relieue him; but the kindnes of the Lord euer works saluation: he can doe what he will, and none is able to resist him. All creatures in heauen & earth are vnder his commaund; health & sicknes; life & death; heauen and hell: for he hath the keyes of both. Let vs seek his fauour, that we may be saued: let vs feele his loue, and none euill present, nor to come, temporall, nor eternall, shall make vs afraid.

According to thy promise.] As David seekes his comfort in G o d onely, so seekes hee it for Gods sake: alleaging nothing in himselfe, for which hee should obtaine it; but that the Lord, as of his mercie hee had promised, so of his truth hee vould performe.

And this is first for Papists; who either doe seek from others beside the Lord; or if they seek from him, they seek for others sake then for his: founding their prayers vpon the merits of others, not vpon the mercie of God, and merits of Christ onely.

And next, it giues this vvarning vnto all men,
that

that seeing the chiefeſt argument wee can vie in prayer, to moue the Lord to pittie, is his own promiſe; wee ſhould remember alwaie to make conſcience of our promiſe of ſeruice and obedience, vvhich vve haue made to the Lord; otherwiſe, wee can not vvith boldneſſe ſeeke comfort in that promiſe which God hath made vnto vs.

Such as would haue God to remember his promiſe ſhould remember their promiſe.

VER. 42. *So ſhall I make answer to my blaſphemers: for I truſt in thy word.*

See what great effects the ſenſe of Gods louing kindnes works in the hearts of his children: hee feares no malice, nor power of man, vvho finds the Lord kind and mercifull to him. This works gloriatiſon againſt euill men; & bold confeſſion before all men, as after followes; and toward God an holy conuerſation, in all his obedience to the law.

The kindnes of God, is a ſufficient defence againſt all euill will of man.

For I truſt.] Confidence in the promiſes of Gods word, is the anchor of the ſoule; vvvhich holderth it faſt, that it abide ſtable, not driuen ro and fro with the wind of tentations: nay, not with the feares & terrors of death. *I know whom I haue believed.*

Faith in Gods promiſes, is the Anchor of the ſoule.

David prayes
for continu-
ance of the
grace of pro-
phetic.

A great iudge-
ment, that men
cannot vse
Gods word
which they
haue learned, to
the edification
of others.

Pſalm. 50.

Ambrose,

VER. 43. *And take not the word of truth vterly out of my mouth: for I wait for thy iudgements.*

BY the word of truth, *Euthymius* vnderstands the grace of prophetic: by which *David* comforted his owne hart, and was able to speake to the edification of others, and to stop the mouthes of his Aduersaries. This grace the Prophet craues, that the Lord would neuer vterly take it from him. If at any time, in thy wise dispensation thou relent it, yet I beseech thee, neuer vterly to remoue it.

This iudgement which *David* heere craues to be averted from him, lyes vpon many: who doe not marke nor perceiue it, that they are so much the more miserable, that they knowe not their misery; in this, that hauing, and hearing the word of God so plentifully, they can neither vse it to their owne consolation, nor to the edification of others. And this proceeds from the cuill conscience which is in them, that neither can they heare it with comfort, no more then *Achab* could heare *Michaiah*, because hee neuer prophesied good vnto him; nor yet can they speake it to the comfort of others: *Vnto the wicked, God saith, What hast thou to doe to take mine ordinances in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed? Obmutescit facundia, si agra sit conscientia:* eloquence becomes dumbe, when the conscience waxes

waxes dilealed.

For I wait.] Gods iudgements are some-times taken for his plagues, executed according to his vvord vpon the wicked; with the which is euer conioyned a performance of his promised deliuerance to the godlie: vvhereby hee makes knowne, *That there is fruite for the righteous*, how euer for a time hee suffer them to bee euill intreated; and that there is a difference between them vvho feare him, and them that feare him not.

And this *David* heere praies for; that the Lord would so deale with his enemies, that the truth of his word being declared vpon them, the godly might haue no cause to be ashamed for taking that word of truth in their mouthes.

VER. 44. *So shall I alway keepe thy law for euer and euer.*

Here is a protestation of thankfulness to his God; which he promifeth to declare in obedience. Whereof first wee obferue, howv our standing, and perseuering in the obedience of Gods law, proceedes from Gods louing kindnesse toward vs, keeping his word of truth in our harts and mouthes. Hee is the stocke, vvee are the branches; vvee beare not him, he beares vs: let vs abide in him, and

H.

giue

God at length wil declare that his word is a iudgement, and that he will execute it.

Pſalm.
Malach.

Because the Lord changeth not, we are not consumed.

The resolution
of the godly, is
not limited
within termes,
but extended
to eternitie.

Ambrose.

Euthym.

giue him the praise of all our well dooing, and
perseuerance in it.

Now, the doubling of the word, notes his
promptitude to Gods obedience, and willing re-
solution to perseuere in it; not for a day, or a
yeere, but alway, yea for euer and euer: not in
this life onely, but in that also which is to come,
as *Ambrose* expounds it; *Pollicetur se & hic &
ibi legem Dei custoditurum: hic in exemplari, in
speculo, in enigmate; illic in ipsa facie veritatis.*

And the same also hath *Euthymius*. *Custodiam
legem tuam non tantum in hoc saculo, sed & in
futuro; quod saculum saculi appellatur, tanquam
presenti saculo honoratus.*

VER. 45. *And I will walke at libertie: for I seeke
thy precepts.*

Carnall liberty
is but thral-
dome.

Ambrose.

T Here is a libertie of the flesh, taken by
men, not giuen by God; falsely so cal-
led: for it is not libertie indeede, but
thraldome; where men casting off the yoke of
G O D, giue ouer themselves to follow their
owne affections: vvhich can neuer but breed
them doubts, feares, and horrible terrors, wher-
with they are straited, so that they know no out-
gate; *Improbis in seipso coarctatur malitia sua
laqueis strangulatus.*

Take to you for an example, a couetous
wretch,

wretch, euery day extending the borders of his possession, excluding his neighbours: doth the enlarging of his bounds, enlarge his heart? doth hee therefore walke at libertie, because hee hath more ample roomes? No, no: *Quantum-cunque domus sua spatium porrexerit, clauditur angustis opinionis suae finibus, cui quod habet non est sat.* But how-soeuer large his possessions be, hee is still inclosed in the straits of his owne narrow heart, vvhich thinks hee hath nothing at all. And so is it in all other sinnes; the giuing of libertie to the will of man, drawes on a thrall-dome: whereby he is not onely captiued of his owne affections, but straited with the sense of wrath in his conscience, which alway followes euill dooing.

This is that strait bedde, wherein God threatens to cast the wicked, in a punishment of their carnall libertie. *Herod* tooke this liberty to defile his brothers wife: he beheaded *Iohn* for reproofing of it; and so thought the more free lie hee might enioy his sinfull pleasure: but did hee by this meanes walke at libertie? No: on the contrarie, hee cast himselfe into the straits of a terrifying and accusing conscience; hee could neuer bee quit of *Iohn*, vvhom hee had beheaded: for hee conceited, that *Iesus* was *Iohn* risen againe from the dead. What euer mirth he pretended in his countenance, hee found himselfe sore straited vvith anguish in his conscience.

This is euidēt
in men giuen
to couetousnes.



Esay 28.
In men giuen
to concupiscence.

True libertie,
wherein it con-
sisteth.

True libertie is that which God giues, and whereof our Sauour speaketh, saying; *Then are you free, if the Sonne make you free*: hee looseth vs from all other bondage, that hee may bind vs to himselfe onelie. And this libertie consisteth, first in our deliuerance from the tyranny of our owne lusts, by which all those are thrallled, who shake off the yoke of God: and next, in the freedome of a peaceable conscience, which is a Christians Paradise on earth.

VER. 46. *I will speake also of thy testimonies before Kings, and will not be ashamed.*

A three-fold
dutie of thank-
fulness, promi-
sed by Dauid.

Euthym.

Basf.
A good con-
science makes
great boldnes
of spech.

IN these three last verses, *Dauid* promisseth a three-fold dutie of thankfulness. First, the seruice of his tongue. Next, the seruice of his affections. Thirdly, the seruice of his actions. *Bona conscientia maximum semper praeat solatium*: a good conscience, renders alwaies great consolation: & *vita legitima fiduciam procreat*, and an honest life, makes great boldnes, to speak without feare or shame; as yee see in *Dauid* toward *Saul*; in *Elias* to *Achab*; in *Paule* to *Agrippa*, to *Festus* and to *Felix*.

The first dutie that heere hee promisseth, is to speake of the testimonies of God before Kings. This is not a small thing, if vvee doe consider, that

that albeit no sort of men bee more obliged to God, then Kings are, yet vnto none is Gods word more vnwelcom then to thē: for the most part, they are so accustomed to commaund, and to giue out words for lawes vnto others, that they thinke strange to heare of a word which should stand in steed of any law to them. It is a rare thing to find a *Iosiah*, whose heart melted at the hearing of the law: like vnto him was no King before him, who turned vnto the Lord with all his hart. Where such are giuen to a people, they are the exceeding great blessings of God.

If *David* was not ashamed to speake of Gods word before Kings; farre lesse may wee thinke was he ashamed to speake of it before his familiars and companions: as hee protests hee vwould doe in another place; *Come vnto mee, all ye that feare God: and I will tell you vwhat God hath done to my soule.*

This may convince the vnthankfulnesse of this age, who hath tongues for euery purpose, but none to speake of the testimonies of God: yea, they are ashamed to speake of that subiect, who vvithout shame or measure speake of all other things.

No sort of men more obliged to God then Kings: yet commonly, none more vnthankfull.

2.Kings.13.25

The subiect of our talk, should be Gods word.

VER. 47. And my delight shall bee in thy commandements, which I haue loved.

Delight in
Gods word, is
a prooffe of true
godlinesse.

None can di-
scern between
worldly & spi-
ritual pleasures,
but they who
haue proued
them both.



Actions of
Gods worship,
are nothing
without a de-
light in them.

THe next thing hee promiseth, is the ser-
uice of his affections. It is not a small
progresse in godlinesse, to delight in the
commandements of God. Our corrupt nature
counts them burdenable: but the grace of Christ
makes vs find his yoke easie, & his burden light.
And indeede, to doe his children esteeme of it;
who haue found by experience, there is more
solid ioy in the obedience of Gods commaun-
dements, then in all the perishing pleasures of sin.
And would to God, they who of a long time
haue proued the pleasures of transgression, wold
turne them, and proue by experience on the o-
ther hand, what comfort there is in mourning for
sin; what is the ioy of a good conscience, and the
sweet inward pleasures of a godly conuersation:
they should then easily perceiue, that the delights
of the one, doe by infinite degrees surmount the
pleasures of the other.

Naturall men, do some externall workes of
Gods worship; but not with an inward delight:
this is no acceptable seruice to God. They as-
semble themselues on the Sabbath with the god-
ly, to heare the word: but what the one doth of
delight, the other doth of custome, or compulsi-
on. The Lord lookes to the affection, more then

to the action: and we should not onely consider what we doe, but how we doe it; so to come to the Temple, that we come with *Simeon*, by motion of the Spirit; so to heare the word, that it be with spirituall ioy and delight, as *David* did. And this also condemnes those of our age, to whom the word of the Lord is a reproach & weariness.

VER. 48. *Mine hands also will I lift vp to thy commandments, which I haue loued: and I wil meditate in thy Statute.*

THe third daie he promisseth, is the seruice of his actions: that hee will lift vp his hands to the practise of Gods commandments: *Pabo operum ut factis exprimam mandata tua*. The kingdome of God, is not in word, but in power: we are the disciples of that Master, who first beganne to doe, then to teach. *Qui fecit & docuit hic magnus vocabitur*: but now the world is full of mutilate Christians; eyther else they want an eare, and cannot heare Gods word; or if they hear, they want a tongue, and cannot speak of it; or if they haue both, they want hands, and cannot practise it.

Concerning his protestation of the loue of Gods commandments, and his meditations of them, see ver. 15. 103. 111.

The world is now full of mutilate Christians, *Platab.*

Ag. 1. 1.

Easf.





ZAIN.

VER. 49. Remember the promise (made) to thy servant; wherein thou hast caused mee to trust.



He first verse of this section containes a prayer, that God would perform the promises hee had made vnto him.

How God is
said to remem-
ber.
Euthym.

When hee prayes God to remember, vvee must not thinke that he chargeth the Lord with any obliuion. *Nulla in Deum cadit aut obliuio, aut remiſcentia.* The godly ſanctifie the Lord in their hart, and think more reuerently of his Maieſtie then ſo: but his *Memor eſſo*, is all one with this; *Perſice et ad finem deducto*: Remember, that is, perſit and accompliſh, the promiſe made vnto me.

Gods promiſe
made to vs, and
our promiſe
made to him,
would be re-
membred to-
gether.

Made to thy ſervant.] As *Dauid* beſeecheth the Lord to remember his promiſe; ſo hee proreſts verſe 52. that hee remembred the iudgements of GOD, and vvas comforted: and verſe 55. that hee remembred the name of the Lord in the night. It is but a mockerie of GOD, to deſire him remember his promiſe made, where vvee make no conſcience of the promiſes wee haue made

made to him. But alas, how often faile we in this duery, and so in our owne default diminish that comfort we might haue of Gods promises, in the day of our trouble?

But what promise is this that God made to *Dauid*? There is a promise made him concerning the Kingdome of Israel; and for this he prayed, *2. Sam. 7. Who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto, &c.?* And now Lord, confirme for euer the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy seruant, &c. For thou art God, and thy wordes are true, and thou hast spoken this goodnesse concerning thy seruant. But his comfort in trouble stood not in this promise, nor performance of it.

The promise whereof he meanes here, is the promise of mercy and grace, which God in his couenant hath made to his children: and this, as euery one of Gods children accounts their own by a particular application of it, vnto themselves; so *Dauid* not excluding others, and yet including himselfe, speakes of this promise, as properly and particularly belonging to him. And to alio did that woman of Canaan rest in the generall promise of Gods mercie, as if it did containe a particular promise to her selfe. And therefore by no temptation; yea, not by Christs contrary affirmation, made for her tryal, could she be remoued from this ground, That the generall promise of mercy, made in the Couenant, contained a particular

Dauid had a promise of an earthly Kingdome, but his comfort was not in it, *2. Sam. 7. 18, 25, 28.*

In the promise of mercy stands the comfort of the godly.

In the generall promise, there is included a particular to euery beleueer.

The nature of
faith.

How faith col-
lects out of
Gods promises
assurance of
saluation.

Ambrose

It stands with
the honour of
Gods truth to
performe his
promise.

cular promise vnto her; howsoever not vnder the name of a childe, yet vnder the name of one (albeit vnworthy) belonging to the family of God.

And this proceedes from the nature of faith, by which the godly apprehend God as their Father, Christ as their Sauiour; and in him all Gods promises made generally to his people, as if they were made particularly and by name vnto themselves, collecting hereof the certainty of their owne saluation. The proposition being furnished by the word, the assumption is made by faith, and makes the conclusion most certaine; the ground of all being Gods vnchangeable truth, and the stability of his counsell; which he will not change for the changes which are in his weake seruants, but constantly performs for his owne names sake. *Sanctis quodcumque spondere consuevit, nostrorum immemor iniquitatum, suarum non immemor sponsonum*: the Lord permits that which hee promisseth to his Saints; vnmindfull of their iniquities, not vnmindfull of his owne promises.

Wherein thou hast caused me to trust.] This is a most forcible argument to moue the Lord to the performance of his promise, When his children declare vnto him, that it stands with the honour of his truth to doe so. The like of this argument is vsed by *Jeremie*: *O Lord, if I be deceived, thou hast deceived me*; which is, as he would say a thing impossible that so should be. And so

David

David confirms himselfe here; that he could not be disappointed of his hope, vnless that the Lord did faile in his truth: which cannot be.

Thus ye see, when the godly rest assured of their saluation, they are neyther presumptuous nor arrogant, but giue glory to God, and the praise of vndoubted truth to his promises. *Non est arrogans vsurpatio; sed fidelis, quia verū Deum non posse fallere confietur*; It is no arrogant vsurpation, but a faithfull depending: for hee acknowledgeth, that the most true God cannot beguile him. And againe, *Non vsurpatoriē sperauit quā vt sperarem ipse facisset*: I haue not hoped by vsurpation, but it was thou Lord, who caused me to hope. *Seruus sum, expecto alimentum à Domino: miles sum, exigo ab imperatore stipendium: vocatus sum, postulo ab invitante promissum*: I am thy seruant, and wait for nourishment from thee, who art my Lord: I am thy souldier, and require wages from thee, who art my Captaine: I am called, and seeke from thee who called me, that which thou hast promised.

Let this serue for an answer to the aduersaries of the truth, who say it is arrogance & presumption, for any man to affirme the certainty of his saluation: *Propter hoc data sunt digna quaedam & indicia manifesta salutis, vt indubitabile sit eum esse de numero electorum in quo ea signa perma-nerint*; For this cause some signes and manifest tokens of saluation are giuen, to the end it may be out

Assurance of
saluation in the
belecuers, is no
arrogancie.

Ambr.



An answer to
Papists, who so
speake of it.

Bern in Septua-
gesim. Ser. 1.

Aug. Ser. 28.

Arguments to
confirm vs in
the certainty of
our saluation.

1. Cor. 1.

Phil. 2.

Christians are
sure of perse-
uerance; pro-
ued by foure
reasons.
Gal. 3.

Rom. 6.

1. Pet. 1.

1. Ioh. 3.

out of doubt, that hee in whom they remaine, is of the number of the elect. *Non arrogantia est, sed fides, predicare quod acceperis*: It is not arrogancy, but faith, to speake of that mercie which thou hast receiued.

To this purpose, let vs remember, that the promises made to vs, are of Gods free mercie: that the grace to beleeue, which is the condition of the promise, is also of himselfe; *For faith is the gift of God*: thirdly, that the arguments by which he confirms our faith in the certainty of our saluation, are drawne from himselfe; nor from vs. As first, from the nature of God: *He is faithfull who hath called vs to the fellowship of Christ, and will also keepe vs blamelesse to the day of Christ*. And againe, *He who hath begun that good worke in you, will also perfite it against the day of Christ*.

Secondly, from the nature of that life which Christ communicates to his members: they liue in him, or rather he liues in them; *Now in that I liue, by the faith of Christ I liue: yet not I any more, but Christ liueth in me*. Now this is the nature of the life of Christ; that *it is no more subiect to dying*, as witnesseth the Apostle.

Thirdly, from the nature of that seed, whereof we are begotten: for as the seed is, so is the life which it giueth. Now the seed, saith Saint Peter, is immortall: and beside, that holy vnction, by which the Lord corroborates and strengthens his children, is called a permanent and abiding vnction.

vnction. All these proue a perseverance of Gods fauour.

VER. 50. *It is my comfort in trouble: for thy promise hath quickned me.*

THis Verse contains a commendation of the word of God, from the excellent effects and fruits thereof; to wit; that the comfort thereof vpholds Gods children in trouble, when all other comforts faile them. The lawfull comforts of nature, such as meat, and drinke, & recreation, becom loathsome to men in heauy diseases. And as to the vnlawfull pleasures of sin, they are so farre from helping our comfort, that they encrease our terrour in the day of trouble; only the word of the Lord sustains vs, and assures vs, that our light & momentarie afflictions shal cause to vs at the length an infinite weight of glorie: *Facile superantur aduersa, si sit spes quae consolatur: quisquis enim meliora sperat, lenioribus non frangitur.*

In trouble.] He telleth not what kind of trouble he was in; neither was it needfull: for there is no sort of temptation can befall vs, for w^{ch} the word of God doth not furnish vnto vs sufficient consolation: Prouiding alway we make conscience of it in prosperity; otherwise, it shall be a comfortlesse word to vs in our aduersity.

Commendation of Gods word.

It will vphold vs when all other comfort will faile.

Ambrose.

If we make no conscience of Gods word in prosperity, it shall not comfort vs in aduersity.

For

The Word of
God is the life
of our soule.

If such fruit be
in his promise,
what is in the
performance?

Mockeries and
tauntings of
euill men, is a
part of Christs
crosse.

For thy promise hath quickned mee.] As the life of our soules, at the first commeth by the Word; so is it conserued by the same Word. When tentations oppresse vs, so that we faint, and our life is gone, it is the Word that reuiues vs: *Vt connexio ista anima, & corporis nostri, spiritum vitali animatur, alitur, & tenetur: ita verbo Dei, & spiritali gratia anima nostra viuificatur.* As the connexion of this bodie and soule is made, and conserued by naturall breath; so is our soule quickned by the Word and spirituall grace. As therefore we loue our life, let vs loue the word of the Lord.

And if the promises of God render such ioy to the beleeuing, what ioy may we looke for in the full performance of them?

VER. 51. *The proud haue had me exceedingly in derision: yet haue I not declined from thy law.*

HEre is a protestatiō of *Dauid* his honest and constant affection toward the word of God; That albeit he was fore tempted by the derisions of the proud, yet he declined not from the Lawe of the Lord his God. Let no man who is truly religious, thinke that he caneschue the mockeries and derisions of the wicked: this is a part of the crosse of Christ Iesus; they railed vpon him, they nodded with their head, and fleered with their mouches, and
mocked

mocked him : but patiently did he suffer this contradiction of sinners.

Ismael was the first, for any thing we reade, who beganne this kinde of persecution : but euer since, Satan hath continued it in his cursed instruments, like vnto him. *As he that was borne after the flesh, persecuted him that was borne after the Spirit; euen so is it now.* Let vs take vp the crosse of our Lord, and follow him, and be content to beare with him the rebuke of the wicked.

Concerning this stile of the wicked, whereby they are called proude, see ver. 69. 78.

Ismael first began this kind of persecution.

Gal. 4.

VER. 52. *I remembred thy iudgements of olde, O Lord, and haue bene comforted.*

MAny are the impediments of godlines : for beside the corruption of our owne nature within vs, we haue the corruption of other men fighting against vs. By their profane speeches they corrupt vs; by their euill example they infect vs : and if that way they cannot come to speede, then they speake euill of vs, they lye, they raile, they mocke vs, leauing nothing vndone that may disquiet vs in our selues, and disgrace vs to others.

Against this impediment, *Dauid* here shewes how he was sustained by remembering the iudgements

Godlines hath many impediments.

If we remember time begun, forethink time to come, the tentations of the time present shall not readily overcome vs.

Prou. 1.

Godly men pi-
tie the wicked.

Eulhym.

ments of God, which in former ages he had poured out vpon the like profane men. If wee shall onely looke to the present time, forgetting the by-past iudgements of God; & not fore-thinking of the wrath to com vpon the wicked; their present prosperity shall bewitch vs, and we shall be in danger to be carried away with them, after deceitfull vanity: but let vs go with *Dauid* vnto the Sanctuary of God, and with *Abaue* to our Watch-towre, where we may looke out, and see what hath bin the miserable ends of the wicked: and we shall say, they buy full deare their short and perishing pleasures; for their prosperity is their ruine.

VER. 53. *Feare is come vpon me, for the wicked that forsake thy lawe.*

Least it might seeme out of the former words, that *Dauids* comfort stood in the destruction of the wicked by the execution of Gods iust iudgements vpon them; he addes this, that their impiety was the cause of his feare and grieve, and that he was *partim iratus quod legem Dei contemnerent; partim dolens quod ipsi perituri essent*. This is the meekenesse and loue which the godly carie, euen toward those who haue offended them; they are touched with a commiseration of them: not so much for any wrong

wrong done to themselves, as for the euill they see their enemies incurre by wronging them. *Nam qui fortior est, non propriam dolet contumeliam, sed aliena peccata; et in sua iniuria lapsum alterius ingemiscit.* As a louing father offends at the contumelious words hee receiues from his franke child, not so much sorrowfull for the wrong done to himselfe, as for the discase of his child, which forceth him to speake that vvhich he should not: so godly *Dauid*; *Dolebat, non quia contemnebatur, sed quia lex Dei relinquebatur, & eorum qui hoc faciebant damnum dolebat, quod Deo perirent.* Hee was afraid and grieued at the sinnes of the wicked, who scorned him; not because he was contemned, but God was offended: nor yet for any losse he suffered by their sinnes, but for the harme they did vnto themselves.

The impietie of wicked men, is here described to be a forsaking of Gods law; thereby letting vs know, what is the weight of sinne. The law is holy & good, containyng in it a most perfect rule of righteousnes; and therefore, the forsaking of it, cannot be but a very high crime. And sure it is, many of this age are guiltie of it, in regard of their deeds; how euer it be, that in regard of their words, they will not hold with it: but when God shall iudge the, what euer liking of the law they pretend in word, they shall be found indeed forsakers of it.

Not so much for wrōg done to them, as for the euill that redounds to thē who doe it
Ambr.



The weight of sin aggravated by this, that it is a forsaking of Gods law.

VER. 54. *Thy statutes haue bene my songs, in the house of my pilgrimage.*

They who count Gods word a wearines, which David accounted a refreshment, are in a hard estate.

The word is conuenient for every state of life.

HE still insists in a commendation of the word of God, from the comforts which hee found in it in the time of trouble. Naturalists, refresh themselves in their griefes, with profane Ballades and Songs; but these increase guiltinesse, and consequently griefe, but mitigate it not. As to *Dauid*, hee protests hee sought his comfort in the word of God: worldlings count it a melancholique subiect; but he found ioy in it: let men in this take heede vnto themselves.

Dauid was a man after Gods owne heart; that is, approued of him: and they who count that to be a wearines, which hee found to be a refreshment, how can they haue this comfort, that they are also approued of God?

Againe, see how the Lord in his wise dispensation attempts himselfe to our infirmities. Our life is subiect to many changes: and God by his word hath provided for vs also many instructions and remedies. Every crosse hath his owne remedy, and every state of life his own instruction. Sometime our griefe is so great that we cannot sing; then let vs pray: sometime our deliuerance so ioyfull, that wee must breake out in thankf-

thankgiuing; then let vs sing: *if any man among you bee afflicted, let him pray; if bee merie, let him sing.* Prayers for euery crosse, and Psalmes for euery deliuerance, hath God by his own Spirit penned vnto vs: so that now wee are more then inexcusable if wee faile in this dutie.

In the house of my pilgrimage.] Vatablus expounds this, of his banishment among the Philistims; that vwhen hee vvas put from his native Countrey and kinred, and all other comforts failed him, that then the word of the Lord furnished matter of ioy to him. And indeed, the banishment of Gods seruants, may cast them farre from their kinred and acquaintance: but it chafeth them neerer to the Lord, and the Lord neerer to them. Proofof this in Iacob; when hee was banished, and lay without, all night in the fields, he found a more familiar presence of God, then he did when he lay in the Tent vvith father and mother.

But wee may rather with *Basil*, referre it to the whole time of his mortall life: *Omnem vitam suam peregrinationem vocare arbitror.* So Iacob acknowledged to *Pharao*, that his life was a pilgrimage: and *Abraham* and *Isaac* dwelt in the world as strangers.

S. Peter therfore teacheth vs, as Pilgrims, to abstaine from the lusts of the flesh; and *S. Paul*, to vse this world, as if we vsed it not: for the fashion

In it wee haue prayers for crosses, and psalmes for euery deliuerance

Bodily banishment brings the godly neerer to the Lord, howeuer it put them further from men.

Our life vpon earth, is but a banishment.



It were a sore
punishment to
dwell for euer
in our bodies
as they are.



Iob. 18.

thereof goeth away. Many waies are wee taught this lesson: but slowe are wee to learne it. Alas, what folly is this, that a man should desire, to dwell in the earth, when God calleth him to be a Citizen of heauen?

Yet great is the comfort wee haue of this, that the houses wherein we lodge vpon earth, are but houses of our pilgrimage. The faithfull Israelites, endured their bondage in Egypt the more patiently, because they knew they were to be deliuered from it. If the houses of our seruitude were eternall mansions, how lamentable were our condition? but God be thanked, they are but way-faring cottages, and houses of our pilgrimage. Such a house was the womb of our mother: if we had beene enclosed there for euer, what burden had it been to her? what bondage to our selues? Such a house will be the graue: of the which wee must all say with *Iob*, *The graue shall be my house, and I shall make my bed in the darke*: if vvee were there to abide for euer, how comfortlesse vvere our estate? But GOD be praised, our mansion house is aboue; and the houses we exchange here on earth, are but the houses of our pilgrimage: & happy is he can so liue in the world, as esteeming himselfe in his owne house, in his owne bed, yea, in his owne body to be but a stranger, in respect of his absence from the Lord.

VER. 55. *I haue remembred thy name, O Lord, in the night; and haue kept thy law.*

THis verse containes a new protestation of his honest affection toward the word of God. Wherin, first let vs mark his sinceritie; he was religious not onely in publick, but in priuat: for priuate exercises are the surest tryalls of true religion. In the publique, oftentimes hypocrisie caries men to simulate that vvhich they are not; it is not so in the priuat: for then, either doth a man, if hee make no conscience of Gods worship, vtterly neglect it, because there is no eye of man to see him; or otherwise, if hee be indeede religious, euen in priuate hee presents his heart to God, seeking it to bee approoued by him: *For his prayse is not of men, but of God.*

Again, this argueth his seruencie in religion: for as else-where he protests, that he loued the vvord more then his appoynted food; so heere hee protests, hee vvanted his nights rest, that hee might meditate in the vvord. But now, so farre is zeale decayed in professours, they will not vvant their superfluities, farre lesse their needfull refreshment, for loue of the vvord of God.

And haue kept thy vvord.] David vvas not a naked professor of the vvord, but a practiser

Priuate exercises, are surest tryalls of true godlines, and why.

Rom. 2. 29.

This age conuincd of coldnes in religion.

Euery mans life declares if he remember God, or no.

Ambrose.

of it also: his life declared that hee remembred the Lord; *Fides probitas innocentia memorem probant.*

VER. 56. *This I had, because I kept thy precepts.*

How the beginnings of godlines, are euer blessed with increase.



AS sinne is a punishment of sinne, and the wicked waxeth euer worse & worse: so godlinesse is the recompence of godlinesse. The right vse of one talent encreaseeth moe: and the beginnings of godlines, are blessed with a growth of godlinesse. *Danids* good exercises, held him in memory of his God: and the memory of God, made him euer the more godly and religious.

CHETH.



CHETH.

VER. 57. *O Lord, that art my portion, I haue determined to keepe thy word.*

TH hath pleased the Lord to teach vs, not by precepts onely, but examples also: in the one, hee teacheth vs what we should doe, if we would be saued; in the other, he lets vs see what the godly before vs haue done, that they might be saued. If wee were the first, who haue entred into that narrow way that leads to eternall life, our faintings, fallings, backslidyngs, were somewhat excusable: but that way is now *Via trita*; in euery part of it we see the footsteps of our brethren, who haue trode it before vs. All of them entred into *Canaan*, standing on the other side of *Iorden*, and calling vpon vs by their example, who yet are in the wilderness, and on this side of *Iorden*, Come forward, feare not, faint not; the way indeede is hard and diffiicile, but the end is sweet and ioyfull.

God teacheth vs both by precepts and examples.

All the godly who haue beene before vs, call vpon vs.



Heb. 12.

Wee haue felt with you the paines of the one, come yee forward, and enioy with vs the pleasures of the other. Thus being compassed with so great a clowde of witnesses, who haue trode the way before vs, and by faith haue inherited the promise; wee are altogether inexcusable if wee doe not follow.

Among the rest
David calls vs
to follow him,

Among many, wee haue heere the Prophet *David*, who hath gone before vs; and by his counsell and instruction, teacheth vs how to follow him. There is no doubt, but (as wee spake in the first Section) if wee follow him in disposition, wee shall also be partakers of his approbation. Some part of his disposition wee haue seene already: let vs yet goe after him foot by foot, neither turning to the right hand, nor to the left; not as *Asabel* followed *Abner*, that was for euill: and therefore in this course hee perished; as many shall doe, vvhoe seeke from *David* a patrocinie for their sinnes, but make him not a pattern to them of repentance.

If we would be
partakers of his
approbation.

1. Reg. 2.

But let vs follow him, as the Prophet *Elisha* followd his Maister *Elijah*; vvhom hauing once found, hee would neuer againe goe from him. Let vs walke with *David* in one way, that wee may bee partakers, with him, of one happy and blessed end.

A two-fold
protestation in
this verse.

O Lord.] This verse containes a two-fold protestation. In the first, hee protests that God was his portion. In the second, that hee had deter-

determined to keepe the word of G o d. And this hee conceiues in such manner, that hee directs his speech to God. Laying open his heart to God, he dare make bold, out of a good conscience, that God was his portion.

It is a thing common to all sorts of men to speake of God; but to speake to him, is a grace proper to his children, euen to them onely.

Either the vicked dare not come vnto him; their conscience beeing so euill, that it is afraide to looke vnto the Lord, no otherwise then a wounded eye, which can not behold the light: or if at any time forced by necessity they would, yet they cannot come to him beeing voyde of faith, without which there can be no prayer.

Accessse to the throne of grace, that wee may speake with God, while wee are in the bodie, is the first degree of eternall life: hee shall neuer be afraid to goe out of the body, and ascend to the Lord, who when he was in the body, went vp by prayer, and got accessse to the Lord. This is the comfort of the children of God, that sometime they get such ioyfull accessse to God by prayer, that they wish and desire, that their soule at that same instant, might goe out of their bodie vvith their supplication. *ἵνα συναποῦλθεν ἡ ψυχὴ σὺν τῇ ἑσχῇ, Vt simul egrediatur anima cum precatōne.*

But who is this that glories, the Lord was his portion? Euen *David*, a King of a most mightie people; of a flourishing kingdome, and a fertile land

It is a common thing to speake of God, not so to speake to him.

Accessse to the throne of grace in the body, is the first degree of eternal life.



Macar. hom. 8.

David a great King, yet glories onely in this, that God was his port. 6.

Worldlings
may be asha-
med, who ha-
uing lesse por-
tions on earth,
yet for them
neglect the
Lord.

Dan. 4. 27.

Why we should
chuse God to
be our portion.

God rested not
in his worke of
creation, till he
had made man.

land, flowing with milke and hony: but in this hee reioyceth not; all his comfort is heere, that God was his portion. This I marke, to make those worldlings ashamed, who haue lesse portions of the earth then *Dauid* had, and yet reioyce in them, that they neglect altogether the Lord their God. They brag with *Nabuchadnezzar* of their buildings; *Is not this great Babel, that I haue built for honour of my Maiestie?* They talke foolishlie with *Nabal*; Shall I take my flesh, and my bread, and giue away? As if all that they haue, were their owne. And they glorie with that Glutton, when their Garners and Barnes are full; *Now my soule, thou hast enough for many daies*: but a short time shall declare, that they haue nothing at all, who haue not the Lord to be their portion.

Now, that wee may be mooued to make this same election, which heere *Dauid* makes; let vs first consider the louing kindnesse of the Lord our God toward vs, who passing by all his creatures, hath set his hart vpon man: all things hee hath made for man, and man for himselfe, and for no other thing beside himselfe.

This is euident in the creation: when hee had made his glorious works, the first, second, third, fourth, and fift daies, hee considered them all in their kinds, and saw they were very good; but still he proceeded to create more, and could not rest, till he had made man. When man was created,

ted, then is it said that the Lord rested. No sight of the creature, could content the Lord, till hee had seen man: all the thoughts of the diuine mind aymed at him. When the Lord had created man, as the perfection of his workes, the compend of his creatures, and the end wherevnto he looked in creating all other creatures, then it is said, that hee rested.

O man, where-with shalt thou require the kindnesse of the Lord thy GOD? but by resolving with *Dauid*, that thou wilt choose none for thy portion, but the Lord. *Whom haue I in heauen, but thee? And I haue desired none in the earth with thee.*

Let vs looke to the creatures, & consider how they are very good; let vs vse them also: but so, that we remember alway, how with them a greater good then they are, is offred vnto vs: namely, that good GOD that made them. What is the creature, if it be compared with him that made it?

Can the vvorke of a mans hand, bee so excellent as man that made it? And vwhy then shouldst thou thinke, that there is either beautie or vertue in a creature, for which it should bee more desired and loued, then the Lord vwho made it? *Pulchrum cælum, pulchra terra; sed pulchrior qui fecit illa.*

Ethnicks saw by the light of Nature, specially the *Platoniques*, that whatsoeuer good is in the creature,

And man should not rest content with any creature, but set his hart vpon God. Psal. 73. 25.

August.

The greatest good in the creature, is but a sparkle of that infinite good in the Creator.

Euery creature sends vs from it, vp to him that made it.



Prou. 1. 8.

Man was made for God, & no other thing but God can content him.

Bernard.

creature, it is but *Splendor quidam summi illius boni*; a certaine beame of that great and infinite good which is in God: and that then onely was the good which is in the creature rightlie vsed, when by it, men learned to goe vp, and returne to the Creator.

But alas, such is our wretched corruption, that the same things which should cary vs vpward toward God, drawe vs downe; and we are oftentimes so snared with the loue of the creature, that wee forget the Creator: not that any blame is in the creature, but as I saide, in our owne corrupt nature; for euery creature in the own kind, sends vs to him that made it, speaking with such a voice as it hath, Seeke not rest nor contentment from vs: Goe vp, and seeke it in him that made vs; no contentment, no satisfaction haue wee to giue you. *The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the eare filled with hearing.* This then is the first motiue; that as the Lord would not rest till hee had made man: so man is bound of his dutie, neuer to rest till he find the Lord.

The other motiue is; It is impossible that man can get rest or contentment to his soule in any thing, but in the Lord his God. Man vvas made for God, and to the image of God, and therefore can no other thing fill and content the desires of his soule, but G o d himselfe. *Cateris rebus occupari potest, repleti non potest*: Other things may busie and vex the spirit of man; but
can

cannot fill or replenish it. *Fecisti nos Domine propter te, & semper inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te*: thou madest vs, ô Lord for thy selfe, and our hart is alway vnquiet till it rest in thee. As the point of the Mariners compasse, touched with the Adamant, trembles euer, till it be directed toward the North; so doth the hart of man, till it bee directed to the Lord. And as the Doue, which *Noah* sent forth of the Arke, went flying abroad, and could find no rest for the sole of her foot (the earth being couered with waters) till she returned againe to *Noah*: so the soule of man may goe through the world, caried in the body as a chariot, or otherwise flee abroad, and view al the creatures vpon the wings of contemplation; but it shall find no place of rest, no creature to content it, till it returne to the Lord. Otherwise, anguish of spirit, and fore tribulation shall be the portion thereof.

But heere it is demaunded, whether or no is this preiudiciall to the rest of Gods children, that *Dauid* saith, The Lord is his portion? I answer, no manner of way: for the Lord shall not be the lesse the portion of one that seares him; because he is the portion of another; hee is sufficient for all. Earthly heritages are the lesse, when they are communicated to many; and therefore oftentimes is there strife among them about the diuision: heere it is not so; there needs no contenti- on about the diuision of this inheritance: one shal

not

Auguſt.



God is not the lesse portion of one, because he is the portion of another.

Earthly inheritances are diminished being communicated to many, heauenly are not so.

not haue the lesse, because another hath much; the Lord shall bee all in all: euery one of his Saints shall be filled with his glory.

Wee see, the Sunne in the firmament shineth vnto all the vworld; neither is there any man who thinks that the light is the lesse, because it is common to many. If G o d haue created the Sunne with such maruailous wisdom, that the light thereof is not the lesse to euery one, because it is common to many, what may wee looke to find in himselfe?

How the assurance of our election may be gathered.

1. Iohn 4.

Comfort for such as are poore in worldly things.
Psal. 23. 1.

The generall vse of this towards vs all, is to assure vs of our election. If from our heart wee haue made this choise, that we can say in sinceritie with *Dauid, O Lord, thou art my portion*: we may be assured, that first of all hee did choose vs to bee his inheritance. *Yee haue not chosen me, but I haue chosen you*, saith Christ. *Heerein is love*, saith Saint Iohn, *not that wee loued him first, but that hee loued vs*. If the Lord had not choosen vs to be his peculiar people, we should neuer haue choosen him to be our portion.

The particular vse of it is, first to those vwho are poore in worldly things; let this comfort them, that G o d is become their portion. *The Lord is my Shepheard, I shall not want*: vwhat matter is it who haue the greatest measure of Gods moouables? sith the permanent goods of the inheritance are ours. His moouables I call the things of this world, which goe from hand

hand to hand : the permanent good is himselfe, his fauour, his loue toward vs in Christ Iesus.

It was the infirmities of our father *Abraham*, when the Lord said vnto him, Feare not, I shall be thy buckler, and exceeding great reward; that hee answered, What canst thou giue mee Lord, seeing I goe childlesse: As if this were no more, then all children, or gifts temporall whatsoeuer; that the Lord promised to giue himselfe to him for a reward. It is marked in him, that by his weaknesse wee may learne to gather wisdom and strength, neuer to thinke wee can want any thing, seeing we haue the Lord himselfe for our portion.

The other particular vse of it, is toward those who haue receiued a greater measure of worldly things from the Lord, if with it they haue also grace to loue and feare him. Let them knowe they haue gotten a double portion, which obligeth them in a double seruice beyond their brethren.

I wish of God, men of honour in the world, professors of the Gospel, could shew as much holy zeale for the maintenance of the gospel, which is the testimony of God, witnessing that he is become their father, and portion in Christ, as they can declare carnall zeale against those that would preiudice them in the smallest portion of their earthly inheritances: yea, for a foote bredth of their land.

Abrahams infirmities, should learne vs to gather strength.



Information for such as are rich in the world.

Shame that they are more zealous to maintain their earthly portion then the heavenly.

But

Jerem. 8.

It is not enough to say
God is thy portion,
vnlesse thou qualifie it.

*Chrys. in Mat.
hem. 4.*
An Interrogatio
of Chryso-
stoms, meet
for professors
of this age.



But this is the time wherein men are fallen from their former zeale: not onelic is the fruite decayed, but the leaues also are fallen away, and there is no courage for the truth.

I haue determined to keepe thy word.] This he brings in by way of probation of that which hee said in the former words. Many wil say with *David*, that God is their portion; but heere is the poynt, how doe they proue it? If God be their portion, then they would loue him: if they loued him, they would loue his word: if they loued his word, they would liue by it, and make it a rule of their life.

If it were demanded of these bastard Christians, as *Chrysostome* enquired of the like, Wherby shall I know you to be Christians? their onely defence behoued to stand in their tongue: for if yee looke to the works of their hands, yee shall not discerne them from Infidels. Looke to their eating and drinking, they are like Epicures; look to their garments, they are vaine-glorious; looke to their feet, they delight in any place, more then in the courts of the Lords house. Is not this then a small defence? all the parts of their conuersation testifie against them; onely their words speak for them: let them beware; for this will bee no sufficient prooffe of true Christianitie, when God shall iudge them.

Hee saith not onely that hee will keepe Gods word, but he had determined to keepe it. Many
enter

enter into religion, but not vpon determination: these doe no otherwise, saith our Sauour, then if a man should goe to battell, and not consider if he may fight it out: or as if a man should build a house, and not lay his count, whether or no he is able to finish it; for this man leaues it at the last, with more shame, then if he had not begun it: so fareth it with many, who embrace religion lightly, and as lightly fall away from it, they not being rooted, nor grounded, nor built vpon Christ Iesus.

Three helps of a godly life are heere vsed by *David*: the first is, Determination; this makes a man to begin well. The second is, Supplication; this makes a man to continue well. The third is, Consideration; and this makes a man when hee goes wrong, to come home againe to his determination. He that begins to liue well, not laying his grounds by Determination, is easily altered: and hee that vpon Determination beginneth to do well, if by instant prayer he obtaine not grace from God, shall ouer readily faint and fall away; for what are best purposes, if grace from aboue strengthen vs not to performe them, but vanishing motions? And in the third roome, *because in many things we sin all*, wee haue need of Consideration; whereby we doe examine our waies, and returne againe to our first course, when wee haue wandred from it.

Such as enter into religion, without determination cannot continue.

Three helps of a godly life.

1. Determination.
2. Supplication.
3. Consideration.

1am. 3.

VER. 58. *I haue made my supplication in thy presence, with my whole hart: be mercifull to mee according to thy promise.*

Our purpose
perisheth, if
God blesse it
not.

Three things
obserued in
Dauids prayer.
1. His Reue-
rence.

The like reue-
rence recom-
mended to vs.

THese words stand of a protestation and prayer. They teach vs to second our determinations vvith prayers: both because our purposes shall perish if God blesse them not, as *Psal. 127*; as also, for that Satan then doth most busily impugne vs, when hee sees wee haue most resolutely concluded to serue the Lord.

Three things are to be obserued in *Dauids* prayer. 1. His reuerence. 2. His sinceritie. 3. His faith. His reuerence is heere, that he made his supplication in Gods presence: if we did so thinke when we go to pray, we goe to shew our selues in Gods presence, how would it humble vs in our selues, & make vs reuerent toward God? Wee know what we do when we come before Kings of the earth; wee prepare our selues, wee come with the reuerence of *Hester* to *Ahasuerus*; of *Bathsheba* to *Dauid*: and good reason so we should doe. But how much are we bound to do as *Abraham* did, when wee come before the Lord, to remember wee are but dust & ashes? and that it is a great benefit that wee should get licent to speake to the *Righteous Iudge of all the world*. And this reuerence our Sauiour commends vnto vs, when in the preface of the prayer which he hath taught vs, he remembers

bers vs, that our father, to whom we speak, is in heauen: we should not be rash with our mouth, nor hasty in our hart to vtter a thing before God: For God, saith *Salomon*, is in heauen, and we are in the earth. Let faith mooue our harts to goe to him when we haue neede: let feare bridle vs, that we be not suddaine, but first temper our harts, ere we speake with our tongue to so reuerent a Ma-iestie. It is abomination to offer vnto the Lord the *Sacrifice of fooles*; that is, words without affection: and yet, alas, how often doth our infirmitie misleade vs to doe so! *Magni certe ingenij est seuocare mentem a sensibus, & cogitationem a consuetudine abducere.* It is a worke of great difficultie in prayer, to sunder our soule from our senses, and to withdrawe our cogitations from their custome.

The second thing to be obserued in his praier, is his sinceritie; in these words, *With my whole hart.* Hypocrisie is a vile sinne in dealing with men: but much more abominable, when by it men presume to mocke the Lord; making a shew in his presence of that which they are not. *Rebecca* decked vp *Jacob* in so subtile a maner, that *Isaac* his father mistooke him: but Satan, now pranks vp his couenterfet Christians in more subtil maner; for there *Isaac* tooke some notice of him by his voice: but now men haue learned to speak so cunningly and Christian-like, that hardly can a man think, how a false hart should lodge vnder so faire

Eccles. 5.

August.

The second is
his Sinceritie.

Against a false
hart, vnder a
faire tongue.





Pro. 26. 23.

The third is
his faith.Prayers of ba-
stard Christi-
ans, nothing
different from
the prayers of
Turkes.

a tongue. But let not men deceiue themselves, God wil not be deceiued: his eyes are not dimme as *Isaacs*; but liuely, quick, and pearcing, like vn-
to flames of fire: he can see they are but a *potshard*
ouerlaid with siluer drosse; and a little time shall
discouer them. *Certum est, nihil simulatum aut*
fictum vera esse virtutis, sed nec diuturnum:
for it is sure, that a counterfeit thing can neuer
haue solid vertue, nor continuance in it. Let vs
studie with *Danid*, to make our hart good & vp-
right before God.

The third thing to be marked in his prayer, is
his faith, grounded vpon the promises of God,
in these words, *Be mercifull vnto me, according to*
thy promise. He protested before, that he sought
the Lord from his whole hart; and now he pray-
eth he may find mercie. So it is indeede; boldlie
may that man looke for mercy at Gods hand,
vwho seekes him truely: there *Mercie and Truth*
meet together, and embrace one another: where
truth is in the soule to secke, there cannot be but
mercie in God to embrace. If truth be in vs to
confesse our sinnes & forsake them, wee shal find
mercy in God to pardon and forgieue them.

Again, we see that as our prayers should be sent
vp in Christes name, so shold they be grouded on
Gods promises. It is a shame that the prayers of
many Christians, are nothing different from the
prayers of Turkes: for what shall ye heare among
them, but the like of these voyces, God helpe vs,
God

God be mercifull to vs: these are prayers which any Ethnique will make in time of his distresse, but we must learne to frame our prayers another way; when we pray, wee must pray in the name of Christ, and to be heard for Christes sake, because he is the Mediator, and peace-maker betweene God and man, and in him the father is well pleased. And againe, wee must not take libertie to seeke what wee like, out of our corrupt humors, as the custome of many is; but we must ground our prayers vpon Gods promises, which in Christ Iesus he hath made vnto vs.

And lastly, seeing this is an argument which commonly we vse to moue God to be mercifull vnto vs, Because he hath so promised; if we would haue this argument forcible, let vs make conscience of those promises which we haue made vnto God. Of free mercie hath the Lord made promises vnto vs: but of bound duty we haue made promises vnto him. With what face can that man desire that the Lord should keepe his promise to him, who had neuer any care to keep his promise vnto God. More of this, see ver. 76. 116. 176.



God promiseth
of mercy, wee
promise of du-
ty.

If we would
haue the one
effectuall, let vs
make consci-
ence of the o-
ther.

VER. 59. *I haue considered my waies, and turned my feet vnto thy testimonies.*

NExt vnto determination and supplication, consideration would be vsed in all our aſti-

Consideration
so necessary,
that without it,
no estate of our
life can be well
ordered.



ons, to try and examine, whether or no, wee haue done according to our purpose and prayers. Consideration is so necessary, that without it, no state of life can rightly be ordered. The Mariner considers his course by his Compasse; if he neglect it, he runneth into remediless dangers. The Merchant, who adviseth not his affaires with his Count-book, becommeth quickly a bankrupt. The Pilgrim, who hath proposed to himselfe an end of his iourney, considers euery houre, whether or no hee bee in the right way, that may bring him to his proposed end: and if he see many waies before him, *stat & cogitat ipse secum utram debeat eligere; nec prius adoriendum iter, quam animo definierit, et pleniore mentis intentione deciderit*: hee stands and adviseth vvith himselfe, which of them he should choose; neyther will hee goe forward, till he haue by inward consideration, resolved what is best.

How much more should hee, whose course is to the kingdome of heauen, consider his waies, and thinke vvith himselfe, *Non omnis via illò ducit, non omnis via dirigit ad Hierusalem illam quæ in cælis est*: that euerie vvay directs not a man to that Ierusalem which is in heauen.

Seeing no estate of life can be rightly ordered without consideration, shall onely a Christian be so carelesse, as to thinke he can goe from earth to heauen, and not vse consideration?

But

But what is that which *David* did consider? I haue, saith he, considered my waies. He was not like them who vse the eye of their mind, as they doe the eye of their body; for with it, they looke vnto all things, but not vnto it selfe: so is it with many, carelesse of themselves, curious to censure others; iudging of euery mans waies, and not regarding their owne. The godly indeede, they looke into all things, and make their advantage of all; but so, that first they looke into their own estate.

And heere is wisdom; All men are naturally wise enough to looke vnto that which is theirs: onely religion teacheth a man to looke to himselfe. *Take heed to your selues*, saith *Moses* to *Israel*: the same said the Apostle to *Timothie*; and in them the warning stands for vs all. *Aliud tu, aliud tua*; there is a great difference betweene thy selfe, and that which is thine: but this is a pittiful folly, that a man shall take a time to consider and take heed vnto all that is his; his houses, his fieldes, his rents, his garments: and shall take no time to consider himselfe, that hee may amend his waies, vvhether hee hath gone wrong, and repaire his decayed estate, which before hee hath hurt by inconsideration.

And turned my feete vnto thy testimonies.

As oft as *David* considered his waies, he found alwaies some defect that needed redresse. VWho can say, hee hath in such sort cleansed his hart,

We should not vse the eye of the mind, as we doe the eye of the body.



By the one we looke to others, by this wee should looke to our selues.

It is a lamentable folly for a man, to take heed to any thing that is his, more then to himselfe. *Basil de verbis Moysi, Attende tibi.*

As oft as wee looke to our selues, we shall find something that needeth amendment.

Bern.

that hee hath not neede to make it more cleane;
*Quis ita ad unguē omnia à se superflua, refecavit,
 ut nihil se habere putet putatione dignum?* Who
 hath so cut away his superfluities, that hee may
 thinke he hath nothing that needes to be cut a-
 way? *Crede mihi putata repullulant, effugata
 redeunt, reaccenduntur extincta;* Belecue me,
 when sinnes are lopped, they grow againe; when
 they are chased away, they returne againe; and
 their fire being once quenched, kindles againe.
*Sape putandū est, imò (si fieri possit) semper: quia
 si non dissimulas, semper quod putari oporteat,
 inuenis.* Wherefore we should often loppe our
 superfluous affections; yea, if it be possible, al-
 waies: if a man wil tell the truth as it is, he findes
 alwaies something in himselfe, that needs to be
 reformed.

Thy Testimonies. Of this see ver. 79. 95.

VER. 60. *I haue made hast, and delayed not to
 keepe thy Commandements.*

Delay of re-
 pentance dan-
 gerous.

HEere is another protestation of his ear-
 nest loue & affection toward the Lord,
 That hee delayed not to keep his com-
 mandements. It is one of Satans customable
 policies, to tempt men with a delay of repen-
 tance: hee dare not plainly say, that repentance
 is not needfull; onely to deceiue the simple, he
 craues

craues a delay: and so after one hee steales away another, till all the time bee past, wherein man should repent. And in this snare many one perisheth; that where in their young yeares they will not repent, but delay till they be older: in their olde age they cannot repent, the affection through long custome of sinne, waxing strong, euen then when the body is weake. So that the day of death, which they thought to make the day of their repentance, becomes to them a day of fearefull perturbation; by reason of the great debt of sinne, which oppresseth their soules, that would not take order with it in time. Thus the miserable man, for lacke of timely repentance, ends not his pilgrimage in peace, but in fearefull perturbation; vnder this punishment, that *Moriens obliuiscitur sui, qui dum viueret, oblitus est Dei*; When hee dyeth, hee forgets himselfe, because when he liued he forgot his God.

In things pertheyning to this life, delay of good is dangerous. If a wound bee not cured before it rotte, it becomes incurable: if the fire be not quenched in time, it becomes vnquenchable: and if flesh be not salted before it stinke, it becomes so vnlaucorie, that it cannot be mended. If a mote fal in the eye, or a thorne in the foot, we take them out without delay: but in things pertheyning to the health of the soule, delay is much more dangerous.

How it brings
many to dam-
nation.



Augst.

Against the de-
lay of repen-
tance.

The

Satan seeks but
a delay: God
craves present
repentance.



All men seek
the Lord at
length, wise men
seek him in
time.

The Lord, when hee exhorts to repentance, cryes, *My sonne, delay not to turne to the Lord. This day, vvhile it is called vpon you, harden not your hearts*: but Satans voice is, Tarry till the morne. Let me first goe, and kisse my father; that is, delight yet a space in the pleasures of this life. It was offred by *Moses to Pharao*, When shall I pray for thee? and he answered, To morrow. It is offred by the Lord, to man, When wilt thou that I haue mercie on thee? and in effect it is answered by many, Not till mine old daies. Miserable was *Pharao*, who delayed *Moses* but one day: and more miserable are they, vvhho delay the Lord for many yeeres, vvhon hee offers them mercy.

I knowe no difference betweene the wise Virgins and the foolish; but that the one did that in time, which the other would faine haue done out of time, and could not. The most profane men of the world, are forced in death to make their refuge to the Lord: then the eye, and the hand, are lifted vp vnto him; then they cry for mercie, and desire all others to pray for them. If wee be wise, let vs doe that in time, which al men are faine to doe at the length.

VER. 61. *The bands of the wicked haue robbed me: but I haue not forsaken thy law.*

TRue godlines will indure great tentations: euen as trees wel rooted, abides the blast of strong winds; and gold that is fine, abides the triall of fire. Many waies was *Dauid* tempted: and among the rest, the wicked by troupes and multitudes, combined against him; yet did he not forsake the law of the Lord.

The godly liue in this world like sheep among vvolues: euery wicked man in whom Satan ruleth, is like a *Cananite* to an *Israelite*, a thorne in our eye, & a prick in our side; yea, and as a dart of Satan shot at vs, to driue vs away from the fear of God: if so wee can take them, it should greatly strengthen vs, to indure all troubles that come from them. There will neuer be peace among those two parties, between whom the Lord himselfe in Paradise proclaimed inimity.

And howloeuver, to strengthen themselves in an euill cause, the wicked goe together by bands and companies, yet shall it not auaille them, nor hurt vs. *Babels* builders, *Moab*, *Ammon*, *Edom*, conspyring in one, may tell vs, *I though band ioyne in hand, the wicked shall not escape unpunished*: the wicked are like thornes before the fire: their multitude may wel embolden it, but cannot resist it.

True godlines,
endureth great
tentations.

What the wicked
are to the
godly.



The combination
of the wicked,
shall not
helpe them.

VER. 62. *At midnight will I rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous iudgements.*

Three things
to be marked
in this verse.

Our necessities
hinders our spi-
ritual exercises,
that they can
not be conti-
nuall, as it is
with them in
heauen.

Yet wee should
indeuour vnto
it.

Why Salomon
made Harps of
Almuggim
trees.

IN this verse we haue a protestation of *David* his thankfull affection toward the Lord; wherein we haue three things: 1. The dutie promised; namely, to giue thanks. 2. The time; at midnight. 3. The cause; because of thy righteous iudgements. As for the dutie of thanksgiuing, wee spake of it verse 7.

As for the time, hee saith, hee will rise at midnight, and giue thanks to God. We pray that we may doe Gods will on earth, as it is done in heauen: now in heauen, we know they praise God continually, without ceasing; we should doe so vpon earth: but our necessities of sleeping, eating, and such like, interrupt vs, that wee cannot doe it as we should; yet happy shall we be, if wee season all our dyets and doings with prayer and thanksgiuing. That as God in nature hath made the knee to bow at euery step, so the hart in euery action might bow, and blesse the Lord: acknowledging our Maker and Redeemer, and directing all our dooings to his glory.

When *Salomon* made harps, and other muscall instruments for the praise of God, he made them of Almuggim trees; that is, of such trees as rotte not. Teaching vs, by like signification,
how

how induring should bee those instruments of our heart and affections, wherewith wee praise God, that we should not suffer them to decay. But alas, how soone do we faile! Oftentimes we begin the day with some seruencie, in praying and prayer, but wee faint ere euen; yet shall we haue great comfort, if when our performance faileth, our purpose remaine: for this will reuiue our former zeale, and make vs to returne vnto an earnest calling vpon God, and that with the greater seruencie, That we finde our great infirmity hath carried vs away from our former purpose.

Let vs againe consider here, how *David* spends the time of his life; that we may learne at him to be wise. Time is a most pretious thing; not such a jewell among all things perteyning to this life. By this it may be esteemed: that in a small point of time, an infinite weight of glory may be acquired; and men who haue beene prodigall of it, spending yeares and moneths without consideration, would haue giuen great riches, yea, all the jewels of the world, if they had beene in their possession, for prorogation of their life one year, yea, one moneth.

Let vs therefore learne at *David*, how he vsed his time: when he lay downe at night, he watered his couch with teares, after the examination of his heart. At midnight againe he rose vp to giue thanks: there-after he preuented the morning watch, that he might meditate on the word
of

We soone faint
in prayer.

Though our
performance
faile, our pur-
pose should re-
maine.

Time a most
pretious jewel.



How the time
of the day and
night should
be spent after
Dauid's exam-
ple.

The same
Christ teacheth
by his exam-
ple.

Ambrose.

Sleepe is the
deaw of nature.

Yet we should
quit it to keepe
the deaw of
grace, or else
worldlings and
Idolators shall
accuse vs.



of the Lorde: then in the day time; morning, noone, and even, hee made a noise to the Lord: yea, seauen times in the day he called vpon God. Our Sauour hath commended the like care vnto vs, both by his precept, and practise in the Temple, at the table, in the garden: in the mountaine did he pray all night; *Vt se proprio ad deprecandum innitaret exemplo.* Happy were we, if so we could spend our dayes: for certaine it is, when our last day comes, we shal haue comfort of no by-gone time, but that which we haue spent in the seruice of God.

Sleepe is most necessary for the intertainment of bodily health: it is *Ros nature*, the dewe of nature, more necessary then meate or drinke; yet as *Dauid* protests, ver. that hee loued the word of God more then his appointed food: so heere hee preferres the prayles of God to his sleepe and rest in the night.

This may make vs ashamed, when we see how wicked men cannot rest except they haue done euill; and how they defraud themselues of sleep, that they may commit iniquity; and how againe the superstitious Priests of *Baal*, can wake in the night, to attend vpon their Idols; that Christians, professing Gods true worship, should so pamper themselues, that they will not rise out of the bedde, to bowe their knee to the Lord: yea, scarcely lying still with their bodies, will raise vp their spirits to praise him.

Sleepe

Sleepe is compared by one to a sory customer, that cyther takes vp more then wee should giue, or then his Master allowes him. The Lord allowes a certaine time for our sleepe and rest, as he doth to all the rest of his creatures, *Psal. 104.* But this is intollerable, That vnder pretence of a little time allowed vnto vs, the halfe of our time should bee exacted from vs. Ethniques in this point may make vs ashamed: It is written of *Alexander* and *Cæsar*, among many moe, that they parted the night in three; the first they tooke vnto rest, the second to the workes of Nature, the third to their studies, for encrease of knowledge and learning: and that, because they were forced to spend the day time in gouernment of their Kingdomes, and administration of their warlike affaires.

Yet we haue now such a number, whom wee may call Monsters of Nature, who are not content to spend all the night ouer in works of darkness (such as Drunkenesse and Gluttonie, and Chambring and slumbring) but they turne also the noon-tyde of the day into midnight. *Per diem illis fit media nox*: yea, not sparing the holy Sabboth of the Lord, they sleepe by themselves like Howlers in their holes, when the Saints of God are assembled together to praise him: but miserable are they; for as they tooke no part of Gods seruice, so shall they bee strangers from the recompence.

The

Sleep compared to a sory customer, that takes vp more then he should.

How Alexander and Cæsar parted the night.

Monsters of Nature turne the day into night.

Ambrase.

What God
promiseth with
his mouth, he
performeth
with his hand.

Sin punished
now, tels there
is a Iudge.

Sinne spared
now, tels there
is a iudgement
to come.

The third circumstance, pointing out the cause or matter of his thanksgiving, is here, because of *Thy righteous iudgements*. Where, by iudgements he vnderstands Gods iust working according to his word, both in executing threatened plagues vpon the wicked, and performing promised mercies to the godly. And for this cause *Dauid* praiseth God, because he found him alwayes as good as his word: and what he promised with his mouth, hee performed with his hand.

And this cause which moued *Dauid* to praise God, should moue vs all: for wee haue felt his promises kept to our selues, and his iudgements executed on the wicked, in so manifest a manner, that men might say, as in the Psalmc; *Verely there is a God that iudgeth righteously on earth, and there is fruit for the righteous*. There is no transgression of Gods law, which in som wicked men we haue not scene punished. If the Lord did only speake and neuer punish, men would say, *There is not a God*: and if, on the other hand, all transgressions were punished here, men might say, we need not look for a iudgement to come. Of such sinnes as we haue scene punished, let vs learn that there is a Iudge; and of such sinfull men as we see spared, let vs also learne that there is a iudgement to come.

V E R.

VER. 63. *I am companion of all them that feare thee, and keepe thy precepts.*

HE said in the first verse of this Section, that God was his portiō: now he saith, All the Saints of God are his companions. These two goe together; the loue of God, and the loue of his Saints: He that loueth not his brother, made to Gods image, whom hee seeth how shall he say he loueth God, whom hee hath not seen? Seeing our goodnes extends not to the Lord; if it be shewed to his Saints, and excellent ones vpon earth, for his sake, it shall be no small argument of our louing affection toward himselfe.

Godly *Dauid*, when *Ionathan* was dead, made diligent inquisition, Is there none of *Ionathans* posteritie, to whom I may shew kindnes for *Ionathans* sake? and at length he found a silly lame *Mephiboseth*: So if we enquire diligently, Is there none vpon earth, to whom I may shew kindnesse for Christs sake who is in heauen? wee shall euer find some, to whom whatsoeuer wee doe, shall be allowed as done to himselfe.

Euery mans company wherein hee delights, tells what manner of man he is himselfe; *Qualiscunque quis fuerit cum tali se coniungit*. The fowles of heauen flocke together according to their kinds: ye shal not see Doues assembling with

L.

Rauens;

He that loueth
God, wil loue
his Saints.

Euery mans
company, de-
clares what
himselfe is.
*Ambr. ad rom.
deuotam.*
Ambr. offer.
lib. 3. ca. 16.

Christians of
an inferior rank
to our selues,
should be vsed
as our compan-
ions.



An example of
great humility.



In the godly,
feare is with
loue, not so in
the wicked.

Rauens; Inter dispares mores qua potest esse amicitia? What fellowship or friendship, can be among men of inequall manners? *Non potest homini amicus esse, qui Deo fuerit infidus*: he can neuer be friendly to man, who is false vnto God.

But there is yet a greater argument; the Lord I E S V S hath honoured vs to be his companions: so wee are called, *Plal. 44. God hath anointed thee aboue thy fellowes.* To worke this fellowship, he assumed our nature; he abased himselfe; he was baptized, as we are; he died, as vvee doe; hee rose againe, as we shall doe; hee walked in all our waies, that hee might traine vs vp to walke in his waies; and might euery way make vs like himselfe: and shal we thinke it a derogation to our honor, to humble our selues for Christs sake, to men of a rank inferior to vs; and euen for the feare and loue of God that is in them, to account them our companions?

Yet further, his great modestie is to bee marked. *Non dixit imitantium te, sed timentium*: he saith not, I am companion to all that follow thee, but to all that feare thee. The feare of God, is the beginning of wisdom. *Inter rudes se constituit humilitate, cum veteranos superaret deuotione*: hee placeth himselfe among nouices in humilitie, when he excelled antients in pietie.

That feare thee.] The godly are commonly described by this grace, That they feare God; but so, that they also loue and obey him: therefore

David

David ioynes these two together, That fear thee, and keepe thy precepts. *Apostat* Angels, saith *S. Iames*, feare *God*; but there-withall they hate him, and rebell against him. In the Godly, feare prepares a way to loue: when loue is perfected, then feare shall cease; but in the wicked, feare prepares a way to despaire, & restlesse perturbation.

Abraham looked for no good in *Gerar*, because he thought the feare of God was not there: on the contrary, *Ioseph* confirmed the timorous harts of his brethren, that they should looke for none euil at his hands, *because*, said he, *I feare God*. Therby letting vs know, that this is a sufficient reason to assure vs of all good duties from a man, if truly it may be said of him, He feareth God.

No good is to be looked for where the feare of God is not.

VER. 64. *The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercies: teach mee thy statutes.*

HEere is a prayer, with a reason: Seeing *ô Lord*, thou art good to all thy creatures, shew thy goodnes also to mee in this, that thou teach me thy statutes. Gods generall benignitie, is extended to all his creatures; his speciall benignity is for his children: and this is it that *David* here craueth.

And indeed, Gods generall goodnes vnto all his creatures, should serue to confirme his children in the assurance of his more speciall fauour

Gods benignitie generall, is to all: speciall, to his owne children.

The goodnes
of God toward
his creatures,
should confirme
his children in
the assurance of
his loue.

Blind are the
wicked, who
see not Gods
goodnes in his
creatures.



toward them, as heere *David* vseth it. If hee care for sparrowes, if he feed the young Rauens when they cry, if hee clothe the Lilies of the felde; are not his own children much more worth? will he not much more care for them? Seeing of his goodnesse he sends raine to the wicked, & makes his sunne to shine on the vniust; will he not of his mercie, lift vp the light of his countenance vpon his owne; and make the dewe of his grace to fall vpon them? Yea, if we our selues, when we were enemies, were reconciled; how much more now, beeing reconciled, shall we be saued?

And this, as it serues to confirme the godlie, that the whole earth is full of Gods goodnes: so doth it also convince the wicked of a blind stupiditye. Euery creature hath in it some note of Gods goodnes, and yet they cannot see it: they looke to heauen; they walke vpon earth; they breathe in the ayre; they warme at the fire: euery moment they vse Gods creatures, but neuer see nor feele his his goodnesse in them, to lift vp their harts, and praise him for them.

TETH.



TETH.

VER. 65. *O Lord, thou hast dealt graciously with thy seruants; according to thy word.*

IN the verse following, *Dauid* seekes mercy; in this, hee giues thanks for mercy receiued. Mercies receiued, as they should be returned with praise to him who gaue the; so should they confirme our harts in an expectation of greater to bee receiued. It is not with God, as it is with man; a man, the more he giueth, the lesse he hath: it is not so with the Lord. Among men, this is a reason as they alledge, why they should not giue, I haue giuen you already, why then doe yee trouble mee any more? but it is not so with God; the treasures of his grace can neuer be emptied: whom he loues, he loues vnto the end; and to him that hath, hee giueth more. Yea, all that now wee get, hee wil- leth vs to receiue, as an earnest, or a pledge of greater good hee hath to giue vs.

So *Dauid* confirms himselfe, Psalme 23. that because the Lord had beene a Shepherd to him

L 3

in

Gods mercy shewed to a man, is an vn- doubted argu- ment, that hee will shew more mercie.

His present gifts, are but pledges of greater.

Pſalm. 23.

How God is
gracious, euen
whē he afflicts.

Ambroſe.

The ſame de-
clared by ſun-
dry ſimilitudes.

in time by-gone, hee gathers this concluſion,
*Doubtſeſſe, kindneſſe and mercy ſhall follow me all
the daies of my life.*

But how ſaith *Dauid*, did God deale gracious-
ly with him, ſecing hee did humble him from his
youth with many ſore afflictions? Theſe agree
very well together: for the Lord is moſt louing
when he chaſtiſeth. *Eſt in ſeueritate eſt bonitas
Dei; ut recurrat unusquisque caſtigatus, & pe-
dem referat à peccatis, & ad tramitem, bonam-
que conuerſationem reuertatur:* euen in ſeueri-
tie, Gods gracious goodneſſe appeares; in that
hec vwho is chaſtiſed, returnes from his ſinnes,
to the right trade of a godlie conuerſation:

Will any man accuſe a Phyſition of cruelty,
becauſe hee cutteth away the rotten member
vvith yron, or burnes with fire a fretting can-
ker? Or ſhall the Maſter bee blamed, for cor-
recting his negligent Diſciple, that hee may
make him more diligent, and attentiuē to lear-
ning? *Sic caſtigare, amantiſ eſt, non execrantis;
& ideo bonitatiſ eſt, non crudelitatiſ:* ſo to cha-
ſtiſe, is the vvork of one that loueth, not that
hateth; there is no crueltie in that, but grati-
ous goodneſſe.

And albeit theſe chaſtiſements ſeeme not
ſweete for the preſent, yet afterward (as the
Apoſtle ſaith) they bring the quiet fruite of
righteouſneſſe to them vvho are thereby exerci-
ſed. And therefore, *Dauid* ſtill craueth to bee
taught

taught of GOD the same manner of way; *Sciebat namque Propheta disciplina utilitatem*: because hee had learned by experience, vvhhat great good Gods discipline doth to the soule of a man.

Basl.

Yee may perceiue by this, how *Dauid* kept remembrances of the seuerall proofes of Gods fauour shewed vnto him; in performing to him the promised kingdome; and in deliuering him from many outward, and inward temptations. Thus the children of GOD, keepe with themselves memorials of mercie receiued: for albeit the time of the full performance of Gods promises bee not yet come; yet doth he performe so much of them, as binds vs in all conscience to remember his praises, who is a most true and mercifull God vnto vs.

Memorials of mercy should be kept.

Thy seruants.] *Dauid* frequently delights in this stile. Hee found that his greatest comfort stood in the seruing of GOD in a good conscience: and if we do not so, with what boldnes can we looke for comfort from him in the day of our trouble, or houre of death, who made no conscience of his seruice? Yea rather, iustly may the Lord giue vs that fearefull answer, which he gaue to the rebellious Iewes, whē they sought his help in the day of their distresse; *Goe vnto the gods who yee haue serued, and let them deliuer you.*

The seruant of God, an honorable and comfortable stile.

Iudg. 16.

According to thy woord.] Naturall men will not belieue, that GOD will doe according to

his

The wicked
dishonor God,
when they call
in doubt the
truth of his
word.

Esa. 37.

Zach. 1.
But they shall
find it a true
word.

Malac. 3. 18.

his word: they haue it in derision. *The vision*, say they, *is but wind*. In so dooing, they highly offend the maiestie of God, imputing this note of dishonestie vnto him, That hee is not so good as his word: but in experience they shall find the contrary.

The godly shall find the truth of his word in mercie; as *Exechias* did, so shall they praise him: *The Lord hath said it, and the Lord hath done it*; but the wicked shall find it in iudgement, *Your Fathers, vvhether are they? and doe the Prophets liue for euer? But did not my word, and my Statutes, vvhich I commaunded by my seruants the Prophets, take hold on your Fathers? And they returned, and said; As the Lord of hosts hath determined to doe vnto vs, according to our owne waies and works, so assuredly hath he dealt with vs*. So shall all the wicked find at the length, that as God hath a mouth to speak: so hath he a hand to execute it; *Then shall they discern betweene the righteous and the wicked, between him that serueth God, and him that serueth him not*.

VER. 66. *Teach mee good iudgement & knowledge: for I haue beleueed thy commaundements.*

THis verse containes a prayer with a reason. In the prayer, he beseecheth God to teach him good iudgement. The word

Tob

Tob Tagnam, signifieth the goodnesse of taste: so *Vatablus*, *Bonitatem sensus doce me*. The naturall sense of tasting, is heere by a Metaphor translated to signifie iudgement and vnderstanding: and that becaule as taste discernes meat, & makes choise of vvhhat is to bee sent into the stomacke; so the vnderstanding discernes betwene truth to be embraced, and falshood to be reiected. This is the grace for which the Apostle prayeth, to the *Philippians*. *I pray that yee may abound more and more in knowledge, and in all iudgement, that yee may discern things which are excellent.*

This is a rare grace. For many by the iudgement of light, knowes what is good, and what is euill, who knowe it not by the iudgement of taste: for if by sense they felt the bitterness of sinne, and sweetness of righteousness, they wold not so loue the one, & set light by the other as they doe.

And againe, this puts a difference between that knowledge which wee haue in this life, and that which we shall haue in the life to come. Now we haue but a taste, then shall we be filled, and satisfied with his image; now wee knowe but in part, heereafter wee shall knowe fully; now we walke by faith, then wee shall walke by sight; now we haue but the earnest of the Spirit, but in heauen wee shall be filled with his graces, and receiue the principall summe.

Now that *Dauid* so frequentlie and seruentlie desires

The Vnderstanding is the taster of the soule, that discerns between truth & falshood.

Phil. 1. 9.
Many want this Sense.



Our knowledge in this life, far inferior to that we shall haue in the life to come.

2. Cor. 5. 7.

Gods promises
cannot comfort
vs, if we be not
of their num-
ber to whom
they belong.

Affliction in
the godly,
worketh humi-
liation,

desires the Lord to teach him, see ver. 34.

For I beleue.] Sometime, *Dauid* brings the reason of his petition, from Gods mercy, goodness, righteousness, power, and so forth: sometime againe from himselfe; as from his loue, his feare, his faith in God, and some such like. It is not sufficient to seeke from God, because of that which he is; wee must also consider what vvee are: otherwise, as *Iehu* said vnto one demanding, *Is it peace; What hast thou to doe with peace?* So may it bee answered to vs; Though the Lord bee good, and gracious, and mercifull, yet vwhat is that vnto vs, if vvee bee such as beleue not in him, loue him not, and feare him not?

VER. 67. *Before I was afflicted, I went astray: but now I keepe thy word.*

IN this verse, *Dauid* protests that the chastisements of God, had made him more godlie. *Euthymius* thinks, *Davids* meaning is, that his sinnes had made him more humble. This is true in the godly, that their sinnes humble them, and make them more godly, as is euident in *S. Paule*: but the former sense is most agreeable to these words: as ye may perceiue, ver. 71.

As the *Philistines* could not vnderstand *Samsons* riddle, How sweet came out of the sowre, and

and meat out of the eater: so can not worldlings vnderstand, what comfort is in the Crosse, or what profit comes by afflictions. But certaine it is, there is none truly godlie, but they will testifie this, that either they first learned Religion, or at least, vvere confirmed in it, by some notable crosse.

But this is to be vnderstood of sanctified crosses, vvith the vvhich G o d ioynes grace: such a Crosse changeth the nature of it, and is not *Pena, sed remedium delinquentis*; a punishment of sinne, but a remedie. Otherwise, as of their owne nature, afflictions are euill, being the fruits of sinne: so they bring out euill fruites in the wicked, as impatience, murmuring, blasphemie; for, if euen good things become euill vnto them, what maruaile that by those which are euill, they become worse?

But now I keepe thy word.] To be afflicted and not purged by affliction, to be stricken vvith the rodde of God, and no correction to follow, is an argument of fearefull induration. As siluer metall put in the fire, if nothing come of it but dross, is found to be reprobate siluer: so these men who are not fined in the fornace of affliction, if they so continue, shall be found reprobate men; the lead is consumed, the bellows are burnt, but their wickednesse is not taken from them.

Alas! how many are there such among vs, of who the Lord may complaine, *Wherefore should yee*

Worldlings can not vnderstand how good can come by the Crosse.

Onely sanctified Crosses worke good.

Ambrose.



To be afflicted & not purged, chastised, & not corrected, is an euill token.

Ierem. 6.

Eſay 1.

Many now become worse after deliuerance from trouble.

These are reserved to sharper scourges.

Gods last stroke is alway heauiest.
Amos 5. 19.

A godly man is couetous of heavenly instruction.

ye be smitten any more? for yee fall away more and more. God hath strooken them with Pestilence, beside many other roddes; he hath marked their bodies with the Byle: but after their deliuerance, they haue become more profane then euer they were before; as if now they had escaped all wrath of God, and no plague after this could ouer-take them, sith the Pestilence had not deuoured them.

But as *Eſau* spake of his fathers blessings, *Hast thou but one blessing, my father?* so doe wee with them consider of Gods plagues: Hath the Lord but one plague? The *Sodomits* escaped the sword of *Chedarlaomer*, and the perill of the Lime-pits: but they perished with fire from heauen. And the Israelites, who drowned not in the Red sea, because they repented not, many of them were stinged to death by fiery Serpēts. So the wicked, escaping some heauie iudgement, and still continuing in their sins, are but reserved to a worse: as if one flying a Beare, should be deuoured of a Lyon; for the last plague of God, is euer heauiest to the impenitent.

VER. 68. *Thou art good and gracions: teach mee thy statutes.*

HE repeates his former petitions; desiring againe that God would teach him. And no maruaile he frequently makes this prayer,

prayer, *Divina doctrina audis*, couetous of heavenly instruction: for he had not onely himselfe to gouerne in his priuat conuersation; but being called to be a gouernour of others, he prayeth so much the more earnestly, that God would teach and gouerne him.

The reason is taken from Gods goodnesse in himselfe, & his beneficence toward his creature: *Bonus es & beneficus*. When we haue to doe with men, we labour by praying them to conciliate their fauour; and oftentimes we praise them for that which is not in them, but we would wish to be in them: or else in so praying them, admonishing them what they should be: *Quanto magis Deo laus sua est deferenda, cuius proprium est, ut bonus sit? qui nisi bonus esset super terram stare quis possit?* How much more should Gods owne praise be giuen to himselfe, whose propertie it is to be good, yea, goodnesse it selfe? And if he were not good, none vpon earth could stand before him.

And it is this goodnesse of God, that moues him to be beneficiall, & gracious to his creature: *Omne enim bonum est Communicatum sui*; for euery good thing communicates the selfe vnto another. And as it excels in goodnesse, so excels it in this vertue, of communicating the selfe vnto others: as ye see the Sunne, which is a most excellent light, doth aboue all other lights communicate his light to other creatures. And if so it be

How due vnto God is the praise of goodnesse.

Ambros. in Psal. 119.

It is his owne goodnesse that makes him good to his creature.

Luke 11.

A great blessing to be in fellowship with God.

be with the creatures which are good, how much more with the Creator, who is goodnes it selfe? And this is the reason whereby our Sauour confirms vs; *if ye who are euill, can giue good things to your children, how much more shall your heauenly Father, who is good, giue good things to them that seeke from him?* And surely, if wee knew with *Dauid*, how good the Lord is in himselfe, how gracious, and beneficent to them who wait vpon him, we would account it a greater blessing then we doe, to be in fellowship with him; and would testifie it, by a more carefull seeking of his fauour by prayer.

VER. 69. *The proud haue imagined a lie against me: but I wil keep thy precepts with my whol hart.*

Constancie in Religion.

HE professeth here again his constancy in religion, amplifying it by this circumstance; that albeit hee was hated & persecuted by wicked men, yet still he followed after godlines. Here we haue three things: First, who were *Dauids* enemies; Proud men. Secondly, how they did warre against him; by lies. Thirdly, how they trimmed their lies.

Wicked men are restless enemies to the godly.
Ambr. in Psal.
119.

To the first, it is manifest by *Dauids* example, how the godly are exercised with the continuall inimitie of the wicked. *Quanto magis quis Deo seruire desiderat, tanto magis in se excitat aduersarios:*

saries: yea, the more a man sets himselfe to serue God, the more stirs hee vp Sathan and his instruments, to be aduersaries vnto him. No band of nature can conioyne them, whom grace hath not conioyned. *Jacob & Esau*, both gotten of one father *Isaac*, both borne of one mother *Rebecca*, lying both together in one wombe, yet euen there doe they fight together. Let vs neuer looke for peace, where God hath proclaimed warre; the world wil hate vs bicause we are not of the world. Let vs neuer be dismaied when we are crossed by them, but rather so much the more comforted; being assured, that while as wicked men are enemies to vs for a good cause, we are vpon that side whereof Christ is Captaine, his Saints are souldiers, and victory is most certaine.

Neither is it without cause, that wicked men are so commonly called proud men; for pride is the mother of all rebellion against God and man. By pride, Satan and his confederat Apostats vsurped to be like vnto God: and by the same sin, he drew man into the similitude of his condemnation; so that now, euery man by nature is a proud man: which makes him shake off the yoke of God, and without regard, transgreis the limits of obedience appointed to him by God. As *Pharao* would not let Israel go til the Lord slew his first borne: so our nature now corrupted, shall neuer render obedience to God, nor loue to man, til the first borne sin, that is, pride, be subdued by grace.

For

No band of nature can conioyne them, whom grace hath not conioyned.

Why wicked men are termed proud men.

Pride an horrible euill.



Grace workes
humility in the
godly.

Gen. 18. 27.

Iudg. 6. 15.
Examples pro-
ving that they
who are grea-
test in Gods e-
stimation, are
least in their
owne eyes.

For grace, on the contrary, euer works humi-
lity: so loone as the eyes of Gods children are o-
pened to see their sinnes, they abhorre them-
selues; the combe of their naturall pride is pulled
downe, and they abase themselues before God
and man. It was the humble speech of *Abraham*
the great father of the faithfull; *I am but dust
and ashes*: it was the voyce of *Jacob*; *I am not
worthy of the least of Gods mercies*: *Dauid* hath
the like; *Who am I Lord?* *Gedeons* voyce; *My fa-
thers house is the least in all Israel*: and the *Bap-
tist* (who receiued this praise, That a greater Pro-
phet was not among the children of women) ac-
knowledgeed in humility, That he was not wor-
thy to loose the latchet of Christs shooe: the
Centurion confessed, hee was not worthy that
Christ should come vnder his roofe: *Saint Peters*
voyce was; *Depart from me, for I am a sinful
man*: *S. Pauls*; *I am not worthy to be called an A-
postle*: yea, he confessed plainly, he was the least
of all the Apostles, and the chiefe of all sinners.
Thus all the children of God giue glory to God,
by downe-casting themselues. And if ye will go
thorough all the examples of the booke of God,
ye shall finde, that they who haue beene greatest
in Gods estimation, haue beene alway small'est in
their owne eyes: the heart which hath receiued
most from God, euer thinking least of it selfe.

A ly.] The second circumstance is here, shew-
ing with what armour the proude did fight a-
gainst

gainst him, namely, with lyes. Satans two armes by which hee wrestles against the godlie, are violence and lyes: vwhere hee cannot, or dare not vse violence, there be sure he will not faile to fight with lyes. And herein doth the Lord greatly shew his carefull prouidence, in fencing his children against Satans malice, and the proud bragges of his instruments, in such sort, that their proudest harts are forced to forge lyes; their malice beeing so great, that they must doe euill: and yet their power so bridled, that they cannot doe what they would.

The third circumstance, is in the words, *they haue imagined.* *Vatablus* translates it, *Concinna-runt mendacia.* So *Tremel.* *They haue trimmed vp lyes.* As Satan can transforme himselfe to an Angel of light: so can hee trimme vp his lies vnder coverings of truth, to make them the more plausible vnto men. And indeed, this is no small temptation, when lyes made against the godlie, are trimmed vp with the shadowes of truth, and wicked men couer their vnrighteous dealings, with appearances of righteousness. Thus, not only are the godly vniustly persecuted, but simple ones are made to beleue, that they haue most iustly deserued it. In this case, the godly are to sustaine themselves by the testimonie of a good conscience.

But I will keepe thy precepts.] *Dauids* enemies fought against him by lies. Hee takes him to the

M

obedience

Satans two
armes whey
he wrestles a-
gainst the god-
ly, are violence
and lies.



Lies trimmed
vp with the gar-
ment of truth.

We should not
fight against
Satan and his
instruments
with their ar-
mour.



Rom. 12. 20.

Dauids dispo-
sition, and his
enemies, con-
trary.

obedience of Gods word. Wee should not fight against the wicked with their owne armour, rendering one wrong for another, a lie for a lie, rebuke for rebuke: no more then *Dauid* could fight against *Goliath* with *Saul* his armor, which was like vnto the armor of *Goliath*. If we encounter Satan with his owne armour, he shall soone ouerthrowe vs; for by striking, lying, euill doing, we are deadly wounded: But to the weapons of flesh, we must oppose the weapons of the spirit; ouercomming, after the manner of our Lord, the furie of men with our patience; their persecutions vwith our prayers; their euill with our good: so shall we either winne them vnto vs, or else heape coales of fire on their heads.

With my whole hart.] See ver. 2. 10. 34. 58. 69.

VER. 70. *Their hart is fat as greafe: but my delight is in thy law.*

D*auid* makes here an oppositiō, between his disposition, and the disposition of his enemies; shewing how their hart was become fat and senselesse through their worldlie wealth: but he, being humbled by the rods of the Lord, had his delight in the law of God, & counted more of it, then thousands of gold and siluer.

When the godly looke into their owne harts, or vp vnto G o d, they see in themselues, such

a power of corruption as humbles them, and makes them account themselves the cheefe of all sinners: but vwhen they looke to the effects of Gods grace in them, working a renouation which is not in the wicked, then ariseth to them matter of reioycing.

That which the Pharisee, in the pride of his heart spake of the Publican, the penitent Publican, in humilitie, and a good conscience, may turne ouer to the Pharisee; I thanke God, I am not like this Pharisee. For the Christian, by the light of God, seeing the miserable estate of the wicked, they could wish as *S^t. Paul* did to *Agrippa*, that the wicked were like vnto them; but would not change their state of grace, with the most honourable estate that worldlings can haue on earth, without grace.

In this that hee saith, their heart was fatte as *grease*; hee noteth two things. First, that they abounded in worldly wealth. Next, that their hart was become fat, senselesse, and voyd of feeling. *Quadam veluti crassities occupat eorū corda, ut stupidi sint in sua obstinatione, neque Deum curent, audeantque simul contra seruos eius insurgere*: a certaine grossenes possesseth their harts, which makes them senseless in obstinacy. It is the principal blessing of the new couenant, to haue a soft, feeling, & melting hart, like the hart of good *Iosiah*: but a hard hart, called a stony hart, an adamantine and stubborne hart, is a great signe, & a

How different effects are wrought in godly men, by their different sights.

Luke 18.

Acts 26. 29.

A soft and melting hart a great blessing.

A hard & stony hart, a fearfull curse.



sure fore-runner of a further and more fearefull iudgement to come, if it be not remedied. It is an enemy to grace; it is the mother of presumptuous sins; it makes smallest sins irremissible; it makes a man Gods aduersary: for the Lord resisteth the proud. As two hard things when they encounter together, the weakest of thē is broken in peeces: so is it with man, when with his hard hart he contends with the invincible God. Let vs pray wee may be deliuered from this plague of a hard hart.

But my delight.] see ver. 14. 16. 35. 76. 77.

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VER. 71. *It is good for mee, that I haue beene afflicted; that I may learne thy statutes.*

How a sanctified crosse may be discerned from a curled.

HEe renews his former protestation which he made ver. 67. declaring how his afflictions made him more godlie then he was before. Heereby may we discern a sanctified crosse, from a curled: the crosse which makes thee better then thou wast, how sharpe so euer it be, if it worke a correction of thee, thou maist be sure it is a blessing. It is commonly in the mouthes of many, when they are in trouble, We must thanke God for his correction. But alas! how can that be called a correction, vvhich corrects thee not? If thou be not corrected with

Namely, if the crosse be a correction.

David,

David, thou hast matter of griefe in thy trouble, but none of ioy; and so canst not say with *David*, It is good for me, that I haue been afflicted.

Affliction, as we said, ver. 67. in it owne nature is euill, being a punishment of sinne: but the Lord, who changed the bitter waters of *Marah*, and made them sweet vnto Israel, hath also changed to his children, the nature of the crosse; that not onely they find comfort in it, but most happy effects are wrought in them by it.

In trouble wee see three things better then in prosperitie: First, how provident, mercifull, and true the Lord is. Secondly, how weake and miserable our selues are. Thirdly, how false & changeable the world is. Beside all these, it is an effectuall meane, whereby the Lord beates downe the pride of Nature, and humbles vs for our sinnes. *Hagar* was proud and blind in *Abrahams* house: but in the wildernesse she is humbled, and begins to looke to the Lord. Israel learned not to mourn vntill they were sent into Babel. *Jonas* sleepest in the shippe; but wakes, and prayes in the Whales belly. *Blessed is the man whom the Lord corrects, therefore refuse not the chastisement of the Almighty.* For tribulation bringeth forth patience; patience, experience; experience, hope; & hope maketh vs not ashamed.

That I may learne.] Hee now condescends in particular, and shewes what good hee got by afflictions: he learned Gods statutes by them. He

M 3

speaks

Nature of affliction changed to the godly.

Three things wee see in trouble, better then in prosperitie.

Iob. 5.

Rom. 5.

The crosse makes a man learned by experience.

The goodnes
of wicked men,
ends whē their
trouble ends: it
is otherwise
with the godly.

Esay 38.

The les world-
ly comfort wee
haue, the strō-
ger is the cōfort
of Gods word.

speakes not of that learning which is gotten by hearing or reading of Gods word; but of the learning which he had gotten by experience: that he had felt the truth & comfort of Gods word more effectual and liuely in trouble, then he could doe without trouble; which also made him more godly, wise and religious when the trouble was gone. Wicked men are somewhat good whē they are in affliction: but so soon as they are deliuered, they return to their old sinnes, as ye see in *Pharao*. These are like Iron, which is soft and will bow at the workmans wil when it is in the fire; but soon after it is drawn out, it returns to the old hardnes. These men vse repentance, as worldlings doe an old garment: which they put about thē in time of a showre, but cast it away so soon as the weather becomes faire. It is otherwise with the godly; the fire of affliction purgeth their dross, and makes them finer all the daies of their life: so that with good *Ezechia*, being once rightly humbled, they recount their by-gone sinnes, in the bitterness of their hart, all their dayes.

VER. 72. *The law of thy mouth, is better unto me, then thousands of gold and silver.*

David, at this time, beeing spoyled of his kingdome by *Abfalom* (as *Basile* thinks) reioyceth that hee found more comfort in

in Gods word, then all the gold, or silver, or treasures of *Canaan* could afford. And indeede, the lesse worldly comfort wee haue, the greater finde we the comfort of the word of God.

But heere his speech is to be marked; for hee calls the word, the law of Gods mouth. Which leades vs to consider two things concerning it: the authoritie of the word; and so it is from Gods mouth: the ministry of the word; & so it comes from mans mouth.

Sometime men looke to the ministry of the word, and not to the authoritie of it; and then it is no maruell they disesteeme of it: euen as *Samuel* ranne to *Eli*, when he should haue runne to God; because hee thought the voicethat called him, had been but the voice of *Eli*. So, many regard not the word, because they take it to be the voice of man, and not of God.

Then thousands.] Worldly riches are gotten with labour, kept with care, lost with griefe. They are false friends, farthest from vs, vwhen we haue most need of comfort: as all worldlings shall trie to be true in the hour of death. For then, as *Ionas* gourd was taken from him in a morning, when he had most need of it against the Sun: so is it with the comfort of worldlings. It is farre otherwise with the word of God: for if we wil lay it vp in our harts, as *Mary* did, the comfort thereof shall sustaine vs, when all other comfort shall faile vs.

The authoritie of Gods word, should be distinguished from the ministrie thereof.

1. Sam. 3.

Vanity of worldly riches.

It is not pouertie to want gold, but to want grace.

Chrys. in Mat. hom. 9.

Otherwise, Angels might be called poore.

This is it that makes vs rich vnto God, when our soules are Storehouses, filled with the treasures of his word. Shall we thinke it pouertie to bee scant of gold and siluer? *An ideo Angelus pauper est, quia non habet inuenta, &c.* Shall we esteeme the Angels poore, because they haue not flocks of Cattell? or that *S. Peter* was poore, because he had not gold nor siluer to giue vnto the Cripple? No, he had store of grace, by infinite degrees more excellent then it.

Let the riches of gold be left vnto worldlings: wee haue to remember, these are not currant in *Canaan*; not accounted of in our heavenly country. If we would be in any estimation there, let vs enrich our soules with spirituall graces, which we haue abundant in the Mines and treasures of the word of God.

IOD.



I O D.

VER. 73. *Thine hands haue made mee, and fashioned mee: giue mee vnderstanding, that I may learne thy commandements.*



His verse hath a petition for vnderstanding, and a reason with it; I am the workmanship of thine hands, therefore giue me vnderstanding. *Nemo est qui operibus & beneficis suis non faueat.* There is no man but he fauours the works of his hands. And shall not the Lord much more loue his creature, especially man, his most excellent creature? whom, if yce consider according to the fashion of his bodie, *Nihil poteris in terra pretiosius indicare*: ye shal find nothing on earth more precious then hee: *Sed in eo quod non videtur, multo pulchrior est*; but in that which is not seene, namely his soule, hee is much more beautifull. So ye see, *Dauids* reasoning is very effectfull; all one as if he should say as he doth elswhere, *Opus manuum tuarum, ne deferat; Te authorem conuenio, te teneo conditorem, aliena præsidia non quaro.* Forsake not, ô Lord, the worke of thine hands;

Man is Gods
workmanship,
and euen in
that respect be-
loued of God.

Ambr. in Psal.
119.

None cā rightly seeke from God, who consider not what he hath already done to them.

The priuiledges of our first creation, are all lost.

We haue neither hope, nor comfort in the.

A man without vnderstanding, is a companion of beasts.

hands; thou art my author and maker; thine help I seeke, and the helpe of none other.

No man can rightly seeke good things from God, if he consider not what good the Lord hath already done to him. But many are in this poynt so ignorant, that they knowe not how wonderfully God did make them: and therefore, can neither blesse him, nor seeke from him, as from their Creator and conseruer.

But this argument, drawne from our first creation, no man can rightly vse it, but he who is through grace partaker of the second creation: for all the priuiledges of our first creation, we lost them by our fall. So that now by nature it is no comfort to vs, nor matter of our hope, that G O D did make vs; but rather matter of our feare and distrust, that wee haue mismade our selues, haue lost his image, and are not now like vnto that which God created vs in the beginning.

Giue mee vnderstanding.] David knew, that a man without vnderstanding, were hee of neuer so noble bloud, or comely of personage, he is but a companion of beasts: and therefore the Spirit of G O D, commonly giues the stile of a man, vnto man eyther made, or restored to the image of God. But a man destitute of that image, Aut serpentem, aut equum, aut vulpeculam, aut inmentum vocare consuevit: he calls, either a serpent, or a horse, or a foxe, or a beast.

That

That I may learne.] Hee sheweth heer, what is the vnderstanding which he craued; namelic, that hee might learne to obey the commaundements of God.

It is not wisdom in Gods account, for a man to knowe all other things, and be ignorant of himselfe: neither is this learning, to haue knowledge of all Sciences, and secrets of Nature, and to be without godlinesse. This is the beginning of all wisdom, To feare God; and the Art of Arts, to practise pietie.

To this purpose, said *Ambrose*, *Quid tam obscuram quam de Astronomia tractare, & profundis aeris spatia metiri, relinquere causam salutis, erroris querere?* Where, if saith hee, it be objected, Was not *Moses* learned in all the learning of the Egyptians? let it be answered; So hee was: but hee thought all this wisdom losse and foolishnesse, in comparison; and turned to seeke God with inward affection. *Ideoq̃e vidit, interrogavit, audivit loquentem Deum*: hee saw therefore, hee asked, and heard God speaking vnto him.

True knowledge is that which works godlinesse.

Practise of pietie, is the art of Artes.

Ambros. off. lib. 1. cap. 26.

Moses learning

VER. 74. *So they that feare thee, seeing me, shall reioyce; because I trusted in thee.*

THE godly, in ordering their life, haue a respect first vnto God; that he may haue glory.
Next,

The three designes of a godly man.

Next, to themselves; that in conformitie vwith God, they may haue peace and comfort. And thirdly, vnto his neighbour; to giue vnto him that is godly, matter of ioy and edification, by his godly life: according to that precept of our Sauour, *Let your light so shine before men, that they seeing your godly conuersation, may glorifie your Father, who is in heauen.*

The power of godlinesse.

Beside this, appeareth the great power & vertue of godlines; that euen the very sight of a godlie man, ministers ioy to the godly, terror to the wicked. *Plerisque iusti aspectus admonitio correctionis est, perfectioribus verò latitia:* to many men, the sight of a righteous man is a warning of correction. For they are admonished, what neede they haue to amend their life, that they may belike vnto him: but to such as haue profited more in godlinesse, it is alway a matter of ioy.

Amb. in Psal.
119.

The sight of a godly man, suppose he be silent, teacheth others.

Quam pulchrum ergo si videaris, & prosis?
How excellent a thing then is this, that as oft as thou art seene, so oft thou doost good?

The communion which is among Christians.

And againe, there is such a fellowshippe and communion, among all the liuely members of Christ his mystical bodie, that they mourne together, they reioyce together; the grace of God cōmunicated to one, is a cause of ioy to al the rest. *Bonus enim insitū est, ut virtutes suas in alijs amēs.*
It is the propertie of the godly, to loue those vertues in others, which either they haue, or would haue in

in themselves: to enuy the good of another, and be grieved thereat, is a diuellish thing. Infirme *Zosua* may murmure, when *Medad* and *Eldad* prophesie in the assembly of the people; but meeke *Moses* shall reioyce, and with that all the Lords people did prophesie in like manner.

Because I trusted in thee.] Gods working with any one of his seruants, is a confirmation of all the rest: for what hee is to one that feares him, he is vnto all that feare him. So that mercy shewed to any penitent, and promises performed to any beleeuing man, should confirme vs in the assurance of the like fauour of God to be found by our selues, if we also repent and beleue in him.

The working of God with one of his seruants, teacheth all the rest.

VER. 75. *I knowe, O Lord, that thy iudgements are right, and that thou hast afflicted mee in flie.*

THis Verse consists of a thanksgiuing; wherein he ascribes to the Lord the praise of truth and righteousness, in afflicting him. Many vse to praise God in prosperity, who in time of trouble, impatient of his heauie hand, murmure against him: but such as are truly godly, do then blesse the Lord most heartily, when he seems to deale with them most hardly; giuing him the praise of equity, and acknowledging

To praise God in affliction is a great grace.



All Gods waies
are righteous,
suppose we see
them not.

Ignorance of
this makes
men murmure
where they
have no cause.

ledging that his greatest rodde is not so great as their sins; as also the praise of fidelity, that according to his word, he afflicts his children, for no other cause but to purge them, and make them more capable of grace and consolation.

I know.] How is this, seeing the Apostle saith, *Rom. II.* that the iudgements of God are vnsearchable, and his waies past finding out? The answer is: *David* doth not so speake, as if he were priuy to all the secret waies of God; but that thus much hee knew in generall: that all his iudgements, whereby he strikes eyther the godly or the wicked, were all right; suppose the causes and particular ends of them were secret. And this knowledge is learned out of the word: *The Lord is righteous in all his workes, and holy in all his wayes.* And againe, *All the wayes of God are mercie and truth to them that feare him.* And againe, *All things worke for the best to them that loue him.*

And it is the want of this knowledge that makes vs oftentimes to murmure or faint, and be discouraged at the works of God; apprehending in our ignorance, that to be euill which in Gods working is good, and directed to a good end. For if wee law the end of Gods worke, which is euer his glorie, the good of his Church, and euery member therof; we would not offend at his workes, whereby he works that end; a way that is vnpleasant to vs, because it is vnknowne to vs.

That

That thy iudgement.] The iudgement of God is taken in two significations: first, for the plagues whereby hee punisheth wicked men in his anger, proportionall to their sinnes. And this iudgement *Dauid* declines, *Psal.* 143. *Enter not into iudgement with thy seruant*: Secondly, for the rodde and corrections, wherewith hee chastiseth his owne children. And these are called iudgements, because iudiciously he measures and moderates them, according as the state of his children requires; not powring out the full viol of his wrath, as he doth on the wicked, but proffering a temperate cup to be drunken by his owne, as their weakenesse may beare it. And in this sense *Ambrose* speaking of Gods chastisements, sayes, *Omnia Dei iudicio fiunt*. That hee sends sicknesse rather then health; pouertie and not wealth; it is because in his most iudicious consideration, hee findes it expedient that it should be so.

Thus then wee see, how among many other differences betwene the afflictions of the godly and the wicked, they differ also these two wayes: first, in measure; *Hath hee smitten Iacob as hee smote those that smote him*? No, no: hee powers a viol on the one, but proffereth a moderate cuppe to the other: secondly, in the end; for, the one hee strikes for punishment, the other for purgation.

And that thou hast afflicted mee in stlie.

More

Iudgement put for plagues, and for corrections.

Why the crosses of godly men are called iudgements.

Amb. in Ps. 119

Afflictions of the godly and wicked differ.

1. In measure. *Esa. 27. 7.*

2. In their ends.

More of this see ver. 7. 20. 30. 39. 43. 52. 62.
75. 67. 107.

VER. 76. *I pray thee that thy mercie may comfort me, according to thy promise, made to thy servant.*

Faith and not
nature, teach-
eth a man to
runne to the
hand that
strikes him.
Hos 6. 1.

IN the former Verse hee acknowledged the Lord had afflicted him : now in this he prayeth the Lord to comfort him. This is strange, that a man should seeke comfort at the same hand that strikes him : it is the worke of faith ; Nature will neuer teach vs to doe it. *Come, and let vs returne to the Lord ; for he hath spoyled, and he will heale vs : he hath wounded and he will binde vs vp.*

Comfort for
men vnder
crosses.

Againe, wee see that the crosses which God layes on his children, are not to confound, nor to consume them ; only to prepare them for greater consolations. With this, *Dauid* sustained himselfe against *Shimei* his cursing ; *The Lord will looke on my affliction, and doe me good for this euill* : with this, our Sauour comforts his Disciples ; *Your mourning shall be turned into ioy*. As the last estate of *Iob* was better then his first ; so shall the Lord render more to his children at the last, then now at the first he takes from them : let vs therefore beare his crosse, as a preparatiue to comfort.

According to thy promise.] Dauid had a particular

cular promise of a particular benefit; to weete, the kingdome of Israel. And this promise God performed vnto him; but his comfort stood not in it. For *Saul* before him had the kingdom: but the promises of mercy belonged not to him; and therefore, when God forsooke him, his kingdom could not sustaine him. But *Dauid* heere depends vpon the general promises of Gods mercie made to his children: wherin, hee acknowledgeth a particular promise of mercie made to him. For the generall promises of mercy and grace, made in the Gospel, faith makes them particular to euery beleeuer. Of this, see verse 41. 58. 76. 170.

Promise of mercy, rendred more ioy to *Dauid*, then the promise of a kingdome.

VER. 77. *Let thy tender mercy come vnto mee, that I may liue: for thy law is my delight.*

HE prayed before for mercy; now againe he prayeth for mercy. The children of God haue such an earnest and feruent desire of mercy, that what-euer sense therof they get, they still cry for more: and sure it is, in this life they can neuer be satisfied. Neuertheless, happy are they who now hunger & thirst, for hereafter they shal be satisfied. *And when I awake, I shal be satisfied with thine image.*

Mercy receiued, makes the godly thirst for more.

Psalm. 17. 15.

But if we marke more narrowly, we shall find, that *Dauid* heere seekes another sort of mercie

Three ranks of mercy craued by the godly.

N then

then he sought before. For first, he sought mercie, to forgiue his sinnes: then he sought mercy, to comfort him in his troubles: now hee seekes mercy, to liue and sinne no more. Alas, many seek the first mercy, of remission; and the second mercy, of consolation in trouble; who are altogether carelesse of the third mercy, to liue well. It is a great mercy of God to amend thy life: where this is not, let no man think he hath receiued either of the former. *Magna est miseratione Dei, quæ non solum remissionem tribuit peccatori, sed etiam certantibus addit calcaria, ut in suscepto certamine pergant.* It is a great mercie of God, which not onely pardons euill that is done, but strengthens vs also to further good that we haue not done: and this is the mercy which here *Dauid* seekes.

For thy law is my delight.] Of this reason, see verse 70.

VER. 78. *Let the proud be asbamed: for they haue dealt wickedly, and falsely with mee.*

Prayer against
enemies, how
it should be
framed.

Basit in Psalme

119.

Ambrose in

Psalme 119.

D*avid* here praieth, not against the person of his enemies; but against their course, their false & wicked dealing against him: Or rather, as we may think with *Basile*, *Orat pro inimicis*. The reason hereof is given by *Ambrose*, *Pudor enim plerumq; corrector est nostri: & dum incipit*

incipit nos pudere commissi, ne diutius pudeat deserere, quæ erubescenda sunt, admonemur. For shame oftentimes corrects our waies: when wee thinke shame of that which we haue done, we are admonished, not to doe that againe, which may make vs more asham'd in time to com. For where a gentle shame cannot moue men to amend, it is a iust recompense of God, to poure vpon them shame, with contempt and confusion.

Shame with contempt, reward of sin.

Still wee see, how the Spirit of God stiles the wicked by the name of proud men: for a wicked man shakes off the yoke of God, and will not be subiect to his Maker; and so spares not to exalt himselfe ouer men in such sort, that there is nothing in man so sacred, so worthy reuerence, which he tramples not vnder his feet.

The wicked are proud men.

But heere is the iust recompence of his pride, *Let the proud be ashamed.* Hee would faine haue honour or preheminance; which God will not giue vnto him: hee flies shame & contempt; but God shall poure them vpon him.

A proud man is iust punishment.

For they haue dealt.] Hee complaines of the wicked, and false dealing of his enemies against him: and it is written to vphold vs in the like temptation. For Satan is alway like himselfe, hating them whom the Lord loueth; hee may well be worse, he can neuer be better: and therefore with restless malice stirres he vpall his cursed instruments, in whom hee raignes, to persecute them who are loued and protected of the Lord.

Let vs not look for peace from the wicked.

Satan may wax worse, but shall neuer be better.

Dauids armor.

But I meditate.] *Dauids* enemies fought against him, with the armour of flesh, wickednesse, and falshood: he withstands them by the armour of the Spirit; nor meeting wickednesse with wickednesse, and falshood with falshood. For if we fight against Satan, with Satans armor, he shall soone overcome vs: but if wee put vpon vs the compleat armor of God to resist him, hee shall flee from vs. See ver. 69.

VER. 79. *Let such as feare thee, turne vnto mee, and they that know thy testimonies.*

Euery Christi-
an hath need of
anothers help.

By reason of
the diuersitie
of grace di-
spensed to the.

AS he was troubled by the wicked, so hee praith that he may find help & comfort in the godly. God hath ioyned his children into one happy fellowship; for his Church is a communion of Saints: yet so, that hee hath distributed his graces to euery one of them in so wise a manner, that there is not one of them, who stands not in need of the help & comfort of one another: where one doubts, another hath light to resolute; where one is grieued, another hath the word of consolation to vphold him; & where one is wenke vnder any temptation, the Lord hath appointed the stronger to bear his infirmities: and this is the benefit which here *Dauid* craues.

Basile so expounds these words, as if *Dauid* for his sin had been separate from the congregation of

of Gods people, as *Miriam* was for her leprosie; and therefore, now praies againe, that he may be receiued into the communion of Gods people. Which more clearly is expressed, by the translation of *Symmachus*; *Conuersentur mecum timeteste*: Let such as feare thee, haue conuersation with me; and let me not be abhorred of them.

How-cuer it be, wee may see that the harts of men, are in the hands of the Lord: and that many times, godly men are made strange to other godly men. Wherein, the Lord hath no other respect, but that our harts should not depend vpon the testimonie of man. God is so ialous ouer his children, & wil haue their harts so wholly bound vnto himselfe, that he cannot be content we shold put our comfort, or seeke our approbation in any creature. And in this sort did hee so humble *Dauid*, that as hee protests, Psalm 69. hee found not one to comfort him; and all for this end, that he might learne to comfort himselfe in the Lord his God.

In this description of the children of God, we see how feare & knowledge are required to make vp a godly man: knowledge of G o d without feare, breeds presumption; and feare of G o d without knowledge, breeds superstition: as we see how the Gentiles, fearing a diuinitie which they knew not, haue fallen into most beastly Idolatry.

Publique sin, is like *Miriams* leprosie, that separated her from the Congregation.

Why God suffers the countenance of good men, to bee cast down on other good men.

Knowledge & care of God required together.



C A P H.

VER. 81. *My soule fainteth for thy saluation:
yet I wait for thy word.*

Desertions
spirituall, doe
fore cast downe
the godly.

As a body want-
ing meat faint-
eth: so &c.

The godly ne-
uer so faint, that
they lose all
life.

David beeing sore troubled by wicked men, & finding that God delaied to comfort and deliuer him, was sore deiected & cast downe in his owne mind: so that his soule fainted, his eyes failed, and his body became like a bottle in the smoake. All hatred, and inimitie of man, is easily comported, where God shewes his fauorable face: but when the godly are sore troubled by men, and find not their soules comforted of God, their strength failes them. Euen as the body, wanting naturall helps to refresh it, becomes faint, and falls in a swoone: so the soule, destitute of heauenly comfort, languisheth. For the godly liue by mercy; and can no more endure to want the sense of mercy, then the body can consist without those naturall means, which increase and conserue the life thereof.

Yet doth hee neuer so faint, but that some life remaines in him; for he subioynes immediatlie, *I wait for thy word.* Waiting for comfort, is an action

action of faith, & an effect of life. As in the midst of Winter, there is a substance in the Oake and Elme, euen when it seemes to bee dead: so is it with the Christian; in his greatest extremities, some spark of life remaines in him. For the life of Christ Iesus whereby hee liues, is of that nature that it cannot die: it may be weakened, but can not be extinguished.

For thy word.] In the first part of the verse, hee protested that he waited for Gods saluation; and now he saith, he waited for Gods word. Teaching vs first, not to seek any thing frō God, which his word warrants vs not to craue. And next, how we should giue such credit to the word of God, as to belieue it; euen then, when in our sense there is no likelihood of the performance of it.

Our petitions should all be warranted by the word.

VER. 82. *Mine eyes faile for thy promise: when wilt thou comfort me?*

IT is a customable manner of Gods working with his children, to delay the aunswere of their prayers, & suspend the performance of his promises: not because he is vnwilling to giue; but because he will haue them better prepared to receiue, *Tardius dando quod petimus instantiā nobis orationis indicit*: he is slow to giue that which we seek, that we should not seeke slowly, but may be wakened to instantie and seruencie in prayer, which he knows to be the seruice most acceptable

Answer of our prayers delaied many times, and why.

Chrys. in Math.

vnto him, and most profitable vnto our selues. And for this cause, continuance in prayer is commended vnto vs by the Apostle.

VER. 83. *For I am like a bottle in the smoake: yet doe I not forget thy statutes.*

The troubles
of the mind di-
stemper the
body.

HEE still insists in his former complain, declaring how the greatnes of his inward anguish, had extenuated & worne the natural strength of his body, so that hee was becom like a bottle dried in the smoak; his skin contracted, withered & wrinkled with the greatnes of his griefe. The like he hath Psa. 32. that the moisture of his body, was turned into the drouth of Sommer. The troubles of the mind affect the body, & distemper it: and the best way, in such cases, to mitigate bodily diseases, is to pacifie the mind.

Gods children
exercised with
sharp afflictions.

But again, when we see the great anguish of *Dauids* mind, and how his beautifull body was now become but a withered skin; let vs consider how how hardly the Lord deales with his children, whom he loues most dearly. He iudgeth vs in this world, that wee should not be condemned in the world to come. By the fire of affliction, he burns vp the superfluities of our nature, which in prosperity increase vpon vs, to the great hinderance of the work of our saluation. And againe, that he may make vs capable of heauenly comfort, he takes carnal

Reasons hereof
giuen.

carnal comforts away from vs: for so long as we are delighted with the one, we can neuer feele the consolation of the other. This should learn vs, not to be discouraged, when in the same maner God deales hardly with vs. His rods may be sharp: but his way is mercy. He may doe to his children, as *Ioseph* did to his brethren; speak roughly to them, and make himselfe strange toward them: but his louing affection cannot euer be hid from them.

VER. 84. *How many are the daies of thy seruant? when wilt thou execute iudgement on them that persecute me?*

THis verse containes a supplication; wherein *Dauid* craues, that God would iudge between him & his enemies. The reason hee vseth, lurks in the Interrogation; *How manie are my daies?* My time is not long, my dayes are but few: then let them not passe comfortlesse; but let me see that thou art a God of iudgement (who wilt do according to thy word) and men: *There is fruit for the righteous: Verely, there is a God that iudgeth righteously on the earth.*

To shew the breuitie of mans life, he reckneth it not by ycers, but by daies. And this consideration of the shortnes of our life, *Dauid* vseth it as an argument, sometime to moue the Lord to compassion, and sometime to stirre vp himselfe to further

Thereason of
Dauids supplication.

Psal. 98. 11.

Mans life measured by dayes, not yceeres.

A question al-
way to be re-
membered.



Prayer against
our enemies,
how it should
be framed.

Such iudge-
ments as are
preparatiues to
mercy, may be
prayed for.

further piety & godliness: as we may see Psa. 39. And truly, it were good for vs, oftner then we doe, to thinke vpon this question of *Dauids*, *How many are my daies?* For we are deceiued vvith the shadow of this life, cōceiting it to be longer, then we shall find it to be: whereof it comes to passe, that men are prodigall of their daies, as if they would neuer be done. Their rents, their money, their garments, or any other thing they haue, they spend sparingly, & with moderation; onely they are wasters of their daies, as if they had *Methusalems* yeeres in a treasure. Let vs pray vvith *Moses*, for grace to number our dayes, that wee may apply our harts vnto wisdom. When wee look to the by-gone time, and see how wee haue mispent it; when we looke to the time to come, and see how vncertaine we are of it, let vs redeem the time we haue, to vse it well.

When wilt thou execute.] *Dauid* was far from hatred, crueltie, or priuate affection: for in all these his petitions he was the pen-man of the holy Ghost, and spake nothing of any priuate motion. Where, that wee may know how farre forth wee are to follow him in these, let vs remember, that God executes two sorts of iudgements vpon men: some are preparatiues to mercy; such as were inflicted vpon *Saul*, when hee went to persecute the Saints at *Damascus*: he was cast from his horse, and strooken with blindness: and for these we may pray, that God will execute them vpon

upon them, who are sleeping in their sinnes; that rather they may be wakened by Gods iudgmēts, and moued to repent, then perish in their impie- tie. Others again of his iudgments, are but forc- runners of that great and last iudgement, which he wil execute on all the wicked; such as were the punishments of *Caine* and *Iudas*. The first, works conuersion; the second, confusion; and for these wee can not pray against our enemies: because, howsoeuer their works be euill for the present, yet wee know not what the Lord may doe with them heereafter.

Who persecute mee.] *Dauid* was a godly man. approued of God, and a profitable instrument to his King and Country. When *Saul* was vexed, he did mitigate his trouble with the Harpe: hee slew *Goliath*, and ouerthrew the Philistims: yet ye see how he is recompenced. Such commonlie is the reward which godly men gette in this world, at the hands of them, to whom they haue been instruments of greatest good.

And this persecution, many waies are the wicked guiltie of. The railing of *Shimei* against *Dauid*; the mocking of *Isaac* by *Ismael*: these the world esteemes no sinnes, or very small; but the Lord ranks them in among bloudie sinnes, and calls them persecution: learning all men not to speake euill, or scorne the godly, least they fall in- to greater sinnes then they are aware of.

But not those
iudgements
that are fore-
runners of
wrath.



Godly men,
euill recom-
penced of the
world.

Sundry sorts of
persecution.

Enemies of
Dauid descri-
bed.

Pride can hum-
ble it selfe for a
greater van-
tage.

Psal. 10. 4. 10.

The wicked
are taken in
their owne
snare.

Psal. 7. 15.

VER. 85. *The proud haue digged pits for mee; which is not after thy law.*

HE insists stil in his complaint against his enemies; & describes them first frō the quality of their persons: They were proud. Next, from their labor & subtilty; They digged pits for him. Thirdly, from their manifest iniquitie; Their courses against him, were not according to Gods law.

The proud. See ver. 69. 21. 51. 78. 85.

Haue digged pits.] Their labour and subtiltie whereby they oppugned *Dauid*, is heere noted. Whereby this seemes strange, that a proud man should be a digger of pits: but so it is, that pride for a time can submit it selfe, for a greater vantage ouer him whom it would tread vnder foot. *The wicked is so proud, that he seeks not God: yet hee croucheth and boweth, to cause heapes of the poore fall by his might.* So proud *Absalom* abased himselfe, to do all men reuerence; subiecting himselfe, to meanest subiects: that so hee might prepare a way to vsurpation ouer his king and father.

But mark; he saith not that he had fallen in the pits which his enemies had digged. No, no: in Gods righteous iudgmēts, the wicked are snared in the work of their own hands, while the godly escape free. *He hath made a pit and digged it, and is fallen in the pit that he made: his mischiefe shall return vpon his own head, & his cruelty vpon his owne*

owne pate. Thus *Haman* hanged the gallows which he raised for *Mordecai*: and *Saul*, when he thought by subtilty to slay *Danid* with the Philistims sword (when he sent him out to seeke two hundreth of their fore-skinnes in a dowie) was disappointed of his purpose: but he himselfe at length was slaine by their sword.

Which is not after thy law.] As *Danid* by this aggrauates the grosse impiety of his aduersaries; so doth he also greatly comfort himselfe. For why shall we be discouraged, to haue these men our enemies, of whom we clearely see, that neither their persons nor actions are according to Gods lawe?

Example here-
of in Saul and
Haman.

Comfort when
we see wicked
men are our e-
nemics.

VER. 86. *All thy commandements are true: they persecute me falsely; helpe me.*

Here he reasons from the equiry of his cause, & the iniquity of his enemies: & vpon these sends he vp his prayer, Lord helpe me. As for my enemies, they persecute me falsely and without a cause; as for me, I know thy commandements are all true, and that they cannot be deceiued who depend vpon them, nor yet prosper that are against them. He shal neuer want comfort in trouble, who cleaues vnto the word of God: who euer be against vs, keepe it on our side, and it shall be well with vs.

The Word
giues comfort
against all
trouble.

Againe,

Profitable for
vs to be exerci-
sed with affli-
ctions.

Amb. in Ps. 119



We should
take heed to
the cause for
which we are
troubled.
Cyprian.

1. Pet. 4.

Again it is to be marked, that he declines no persecution, but seeks Gods help in it. He knew, that all they who will liue godly in Christ, must suffer persecution; *Denotionem fidei, pr alia persequuntur, & Cito fides in exercitata languescit*; Faith not exercised with tentation easily languishes: yea, sith the Lord chastises euery one whom he loues, hee may iustly suspect himselfe, who liues without a crosse. *Si desint certamina, vereor ne deesse videatur, qui certare desideret*; If there be a man who hath no battell, it is to be feared, least he be such a one as desires not to fight: and so what can he be but a captiue of Satan?

But in al our persecutions let vs euer take heed that our cause be righteous, and we may say, *They persecute me falsly: potest enim quis persecutiones pati & non iniuste*: and it is euer *Causa non peccata facit Martyrem*. But let none of you suffer as a murtherer, ora thiefe, or an euill doer, or a busie body: if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but glorifie God in this behalfe.

Helpe mee.] Profane mockers thinke that a man is weake when he is driuen to Gods helpe; but indeed then he is strongest when he is weakest in himselfe, and seeks help in his God. So long as we depend on the arme of flesh, whether it be our own or others, the Lord will do the lesse for vs: but when distrusting our selues we relie vpon him, then is he strongest to worke for vs.

Ver.

VER. 87. *They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsooke not thy precepts.*

IN this verse are two things; a complaint of the malice of his enemies, & a protestation of his constant affection toward the word of God. In the first he complains, they had not only troubled him, but almost consumed him: the malicious cruelty of the wicked is insatiable, it cannot be quenched: nay, not by death; for euen after death they rent both the name and the bodies of godly men. *David* was not thus farre deliuered into his enemies hands; but he complaines, that their malice almost had vndone him. We mark it for this end, that we may know it is Gods great providence, that at any time we liue among the wicked, and are not consumed by them.

Secondly, we marke here the great weakenesse and infirmity of Gods children, who oftentimes are more discouraged wth those tentations which come immediatly from men, then with those others which com immediatly from God; in the one they stand strong; in the other they faint and are overcome. Surely because wee are in a great parte carnall, therefore is it, that the want of mans comfort and countenance commoues vs. If we were as we should be, or as *Nazianzen* compares vs, like Rockes in the Sea; what would we regard the wind of mens mouthes, or raging waues of their turbulent affections? As an
arrow

Malice of the wicked is insatiable against the godly.

They rent both their names and their bodies after they are dead.

It is mans infirmity to be cast down with tentations coming from men, more then those that come from God.

Nazian.



arrow shot at a stone, returns to him who sent it, or otherwise falls downe to the ground: so an iniurie done to a spirituall man, who is built like a lively stone vpon the Rocke Christ Iesus, returns to the doer, but troubles not the receiuer. If it be otherwise, that we consume and faint for the iniuries of men, all this weakenesse proceeds from our vnregenerate nature.

Why God will haue his children brought very low by affliction.

1. Cor. 1.

Infidelity ready to goe & whooring fro God.

Thirdly, we marke here the Lords dispensation, in his manner of working with his children; who not onely suffers them to be troubled, but brought so lowe by trouble, that in their owne sense they are almost consumed. Both in outward & inward troubles doth the Lord humble them so farre, that they are brought euen to the doore of death, that so their faith and his truth may be the more manifested. Thus the Apostle protests, that he receiued in himselfe the sentence of death; all for this end, that hee might learne not to trust in himselfe, but in God, who raiseth the dead. For so long as in danger there is any hope of remedy, our infidelity casts her eye a wrong way: but when we are brought to such extremity, that with *Peter* we begin to linke in affliction, then we looke to the Lord; we craue the helpe of his hand, and hee releueth vs; and wee cannot but acknowledge that our deliuerance is come from him onely: and so by the greatnesse of our trouble, our faith is corroborate, and the praise of Gods truth more cleerely manifested.

Ver.

VER. 88. *Quicken mee, according to thy louing kindnesse: so shall I keepe the testimonies of thy mouth.*

MAny a time in this Psalme doth *Dauid* make this petition: & it seems strange, that so often hee should acknowledge himselfe a dead man, and desire God to quicken him. But so it is vnto the child of God; euerie desertion, and decay of strength, is a death: so desirous are they to liue vnto G O D, that vwhen they faile in it, and find any inabilitie in their soules to serue G O D. as they would, they account themselues but dead, and pray the Lord to quicken them.

According to thy louing kindnesse.] Hee opposes Gods kindnesse to his enemies malice; and it is very comfortable: I am troubled with their malice for thy sake; and therefore I craue to be refreshed with thy kindnesse: acknowledging, that in Gods kindnesse, there is comfort enough against all the malice of wicked men whatsoever; according to that opposition vvhich hee makes in another place: *Why boastest thou thy selfe in thy malice? the louing kindnesse of the Lord indureth daily.*

Dauid knew a two-fold kindnesse or benigntie in God: One generall, extended to all his creatures; whereof he speakes, Psalm 145. *All lining creatures*

Desertion is like death to the godly.

Gods kindnes is our defence against mans malice.

Psalme 52. 1.

A two-fold kindnesse in God.
Psal. 145.

Pſalm. 106.

creatures depend vpon thee, and thou giueſt them meate in due ſeaſon. Another, ſpeciall; toward his owne beloued in Chriſt: and for this hee prayeth, Pſalme 106. *Viſit mee with the ſaluati- on of thy people.* And againe; *Looke vpon mee, and be mercifull vnto mee, as thou uſeſt to thoſe that feare thy name.* And for this now he pray- eth, that God would be good vnto him: not one- ly by that generall kindneſſe, by the which as a Creator hee is good vnto all his creatures, but according to his ſpeciall fauour; whereby, as a louing father, he abounds in kindneſſe, towards all his children in Chriſt Ieſus.

'A man without
grace is but
head, and can
doe no good.

Prefumptuous
professors re-
proued.



So ſhall I keepe the teſtimonies of thy mouth.] Hee proteſts heere, that vnleſſe the Lord quic- ken him, there is no ſtrength in him to obey, nor to doe any other action pertaining to Gods ſpirituall worſhippe: no more then a dead man can doe actions competent to the naturall life.

. But the preſumptuous professors of this age, find no difficultie in theſe works: they think they can pray well enough, euer when they liſt them- ſelues: but they are faire deceiued; for vnleſſe the Lord renew his mercy toward vs, & quicken vs daily by his ſpirit of grace, wee ſhall be but like ſenſeleſſe ſtocks in prayling, praying, & hearing the Lord our God. *Non enim communis hec vita cuſtodit celeſte mandatum, ſed illa que munere fulcitur aeterno per operationē gratia ſpiritalis:*
for

for it is not this common life which keeps the
heauenly commaundement; but that life which
is sustained by the eternall, and spirituall operation
of the grace of God, which the Lord may
encrease, and conserue in vs for euer.

O 2 LAMED.



L A M E D.

VER. 89. O Lord, thy word endureth for ever
in heauen.

A comfortable
meditation of
the eternitie of
Gods word.

IN the last Section, *Danid* complained to God of the malicious doings of his enemies; he comes now to shew what sustained him in his troubles: to weet, the certaintie and eternitie of the word of God; by the which he considers, that both heauen and earth were sustained: and thereof concludes, that so long as he trusted to Gods word, he could not faile. So that he giues this glory to the Lord, that his word onely kept him, that he perished not in his affliction.

Thy word.] *Danid* here makes a secret opposition between the words of his enemies, and Gods word. Sore was he troubled with the long toings of the wicked. *Hoc enim est opus diaboli, vt seruos Dei mendacio laceret, & falsis opinionibus gloriosum nomen infamet; vt qui conscientia sua luce clarescunt, alienis rumoribus sordidentur.* It is true which *Philo* saith, *Veritas opinione melior est, non tamen est negligenda fama:* truth is better then opinion.

The word of
God, opposed
to the word of
man.
*Cypr. lib. 4.
Epist. 2.*

Philo.

pinion; and it makes not much, what wrong opinion be conceiued of vs: yet the same or good name of a man is not to be neglected (specially if he be in a publick office) that by his name he may do good vnto others. But because this cannot be obtained, and Innocencie it selfe cannot hold off the scourge of the tongue, wee must oppone the word of God, to the words of wicked men; resting with *Iob* in this, *That our witnesse is in heaven*: and with *S. Paul*, in the testimonie of a good conscience. Then shall we not be discouraged for the words of man, hauing both Gods word, and our owne conscience, to warrant vs.

And for our farther comfort, let vs remember how the words of men, when they are greatest, are most vaine and effectlesse; and on the contrarie, that God is as good, as his word; yea, and better, doing more then can be expressed by word.

It was a proud word of *Iezabel*, *God doe so to me, and more also, if I haue not the head of Eljah ere to morrow at this time*: but the dogs got her head, and shee got not the head of *Eljah*. Such also were the words of *Sennacherib*, boasting by *Rabsache*, that he would make the inhabitants of Ierusalem to drink their own pisse: but these were vaine words, and vanished with the wind. Onely the counsell of the Lord stands: what hee determines, shall be done; and as he speaks, it shall assuredly come to passe.

The good name of a christian should be regarded: and why.

Innocence defends vs not from the calumnies of men.

Words of men most effectlesse, when they are stoutest.



L A M E D.

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A comfortable meditation of the eternitie of Gods word.

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What is meant
hereby heauē.

In heauen.] By this, *Basile* vnderstands *Angelorum cunctus cælum inhabitantes, qui diuinam legem custodiunt*: the company of innumerable Angels, who obserue the law of God. But the words following, declare hee meanes the frame of the same visible works; wherein the constancie of Gods truth doth appeare most manifestly.

The changes
of this world,
cumber our
faith.

For two causes then doth *Dauid* so speak. First, to draw vs from looking to the instabilitie of things heere vpon earth (wherein are restlesse changes and vicissitudes) to a consideration of the stabilitie of Gods decree in heauen. *Vicunque versentur res humana, & omnia sint varijs inclinationibus obnoxia, tamen verbum Dei non est subiectum ordini naturali*: In earth, the word of God is not onely controuerted, but contradicted and resisted; and the state of things so mutable, that oftentimes the wicked prosper and are exalted, the godly cast downe, and sore oppressed. To vphold vs against this tentation, let vs looke vp, & cast the anchor of our soules within the vaile: there we shal see an vnchangeable decree of God; which shall change all these things againe, and bring to the end spoken of in his word.

Psal.

Then it is
good to looke
vp vnto heauē.

Heb. 6. 19.

The visible
frame of hea-
uen, a witnesse
of Gods eter-
nall truth.

The other cause why he so speaks, is, that this visible frame of the heauen, stands as an eternall witnes of the veritie of Gods word, that hee will not retreat nor call back that which hee speaks: for he once commanded the heauens to be, and incontinent they were, and euer since continue.

Thus

Thus wee see how the godly profit by looking into the works of God; euer drawing some spirituall consideration out of them: but of this hereafter.

VER. 90. *Thy truth is from generation to generation: thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth.*

AS hee collected the certaintie of Gods word, by the indurance of heauē; so now he confirmes it, by considering the foundation of the earth. Sith the foundation of the earth, made by the word of God, abides sure, shal we not think, that the foundation of our saluation, laid in Christ Iesus, is much more sure? Though the creatures cannot teach vs the way of saluation (for, that we must learn by the word) yet doe they confirme that which the word saith. *Thus saith the Lord, vvhogines the Sunne for a light to the day, and the courses of the Moone and Starres for a light to the night; If these ordinances depart out of my sight, then shall the seede of Israel cease from beeing a Nation before mee for euer.* As there *Jeremie* gathers the stabilitie of the Church, from the stabilitie of the creatures: so here *Dauid* cōfirmes the certainty of our saluation, by the most certaine & vnchangeable course of the creatures: and both of them are

The creatures cannot teach the way of saluation, but cōfirme vs in it.



Iere. 31. 35.

The certaintie of our saluatiō.

The glory of
God shineth in
the worke of
creation.
Iob. 38.

Earth founded
without a fou-
dation.

Creation as a
mother; Pro-
vidence a nurse
conseruing
things created.



amplified by Christ Iesus; *Heauen & earth may passe, but one iot of Gods word shal not fall to the ground.* Let vs therefore be strengthened in the faith, and giue glory to God.

Thou hast laid.] This worke of God is often mentioned in holy Scripture, to commend the glory of Gods wilddom and power. Yea, the Lord him selfe glories in it: as ye see in his speech to *Iob*; *Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth? declare, if thou can, who laid the measures thereof? who first stretched the line ouer it? where-upon are the foundations of it set? or who layd the corner stone therof?* He hath founded it without a foundation: for the pillars of the earth, mentioned by *Anna*, are no other but his word and decree. But alas! how great is our stupiditie? vvee walk vpon earth, & it beareth vs vp: but we neuer consider, how God sustaineth it by his mightie power, that we may giue glory to him.

And it abides.] As the Lord by his word made the worlds; so beares hee up all things by his mightie word. Creation is as the mother, and Providencethe nurse & conseruer of al the works of God. God is not like man; for hee, when hee hath made a worke, cannot maintaine it: hee buildeth a shippe, and cannot saue it from shipwrack; hee edifies a house, but cannot keepe it from decay: it is otherwise with God; we daily see his conseruing power, vpholding his creatures: vvhich should confirme vs, that hee will
nor

nor cast vs off, nor suffer vs to perish (sith we are the works of his hands) if wee doe depend vpon him, and giue him the glory of our Creator, Conseruer, and Redeemer.

VER. 91. *They continue to this day by thine ordinance: for all are thy seruants.*

THe same argument by which *David* here proues the truth of Gods word, is vied by profane mockers to improue it. *Where is (say they) the promise of his comming? for since the fathers died, all things continue alike from the beginning of the Creation.* There is so great difference between a godly, and a godlesse hart, that wherethe one of euery thing learnes to be more godly; the other learnes to be more profane: like poysonable Wasps, who out of most wholsome herbs, gather nothing but poyson.

For all are thy seruants.] From the Angel to the worrne, all serue him: he is the Lord of Hosts; let vs also serue him, and then shall they serue vs. But it is both sinne and shame, that where the raging water, and furious fire serue God at his commaund, onely man, made to his own image, disobeyes him. And therefore againe, feareful is the recompence; that where it is said, The Lord reioycest in all his works, of man onely the Lord said, *It repents mee that I made man.*

Out of the wholsom word profane men (like wasps) gather poyson.
2. Pet. 3. 4.

All creatures, fro the Angel to the worrne, serue the Lord of Hosts.

Plalm.

Genr. 6.

The

The Lord grant it may repent vs, that euer we offended so good a God: and so the Lord may be pacified toward vs in Christ Iesus.

VER. 92. *Except thy law had been my delight, I should now haue perished in mine affliction.*

Sith other creatures are vpholde by his word, much more the Christian.

Comfort which is not from Gods word, brings two great euils.

The word hath comfort for euery estate of life.

HE now declares vnto vs what profit hee made of his former meditatio: to weet, that the certaintie of Gods word kept him, that he perished not in his affliction. Sith he saw it was a sure and powerful word, whereby other creatures were sustained, he collects it could neuer faile him: & so leaning vpon it, he found him selfe vpholden by it in his greatest afflictions.

Let vs learne of *Dauid*, to seeke our comfort in time of trouble, out of the word of God: for all other comfort, which is sought with neglect of this comfort, brings two great euils. First, it encreaseth griefe, how-euer for a time it seeme to mitigate it. And next, it leaues a man destitute, when he hath most need of comfort. Onelie the comfort of Gods word bides with vs, when all other comfort forsakes vs.

My delight.] The word signifieth delights, in the plurall number. Many were the sorowes of *Dauids* life: but against them all, he found as many comforts & delectations in Gods word. With such varietie of holy wisdom, hath God penned his

his word, that it hath conuenient comfort for euery state of life: & therefore the children of God account nothing so deere as it; they preferre it to their appointed foode. Yea, as the body cannot liue out of the owne element of aire; so cannot the soule of a godly man, without comfort of the word. Where, if it be objected to vs by worldlings, Where are those manifold delights which ye say are in the word? we hear nothing but one & the selfe same thing repeated vnto vs: The best answer to them is, *Come and see. Taste and consider* how gracious the Lord is: and yee shal find, that euery repetitiō of it brings new delight. And this they may learne by their naturall affection toward bodily foode: which is so great, that the same kind of foode, where-vpon they feede this day, they long for it againe to morrow; and with a new appetite, long to haue renewed every day. And if they were as well acquainted with the spirituall life, their affection would be, in the same manner, renewed every day toward the word of God. For the truth is, that no Monarch in the world can furnish his table with such varietie of delicates, as are offred to vs in the treasures of Gods word.

Perished in mine affliction.] *David* was a godly man, and deerey beloued of the Lord his God; yet is hee sore humbled by affliction: for euen those branches which are fruitfull, God will purge, to make them more fruitfull.

Our

An answer to
worldlings,
who say they
find no delight
in Gods word.



Men fruitfull in
gallinelle, by
affliction made
more fruitfull
Iohn 15.

Our nature is so rebellious, that without sore afflictions, it cannot be tamed & subdued. Stones cannot be squared for palace-work, without strokes of the hammer; gold can not be purged and prepared for work, without fire; neither is corne separated from the chaffe, without wind. We are Gods corne: let vs abide the wind of temptation, to cleanse vs from the chaffe of our corruption. Wee must suffer the fire of affliction, that we may be fined, and made vessels of honour for the house of God. And we must be content, that the hammer of God strike vpon vs, to beat away our proud lumps, that so we may be squared, and made ready, like liuely stones, to be laid in heauenly Jerusalem. More of this, see ver. 50. 52.



VER. 93. *I will neuer forget thy precepts: for by them thou hast quickned me.*

None cōtemne
Gods word,
but such as
haue gotten no
benefit by it.
Basile in Psa.
119.

THis verse hath a protestatiō of his thankfulness; he had found life in Gods word, and he resolues neuer to forget it: *Experientia edoctus inificationes tuas producere vitā, inextinguibilem illarū memoriā seruabo.* It is no maruel, that they who neuer got life by the word of God, haue no delight in it: the excuses of men here auaille nor. Certain it is, the cause of all contempt of Gods word, is from this, that men neuer found life, nor comfort by it. Whereof see Sect. 1.

But

But it is worthy to be marked, that he saith nor, the Word quickned him; but God by the Word quickned him. The Word was preached at one time, by one Preacher *S. Paul*, to many people assembled together at *Philippi*; but many heard it who got not life by it; onely *Lydia* by that Sermon had her heart opened. *Paul* may plant, *Apollo* may water; but God must giue the increase. Let vs thanke God for the word he hath giuen vs; and let vs pray to God that grace may be ioyned with it: so with the Gospell, hauing the blessing of the Gospell, it shall become the power of God to our saluation.

It is not the Word that quickens, but God by his Word.

VER. 94. *I am thine, saue me: for I haue sought thy precepts.*

MAny reasons hath *Dauid* vsed hitherto, to moue the Lord to bee mercifull to him: but none more forcible then this; *I am thine*. A strong reason indeed, where man in a good conscience can vse it: for if we who are euill and weake, haue a care of euery thing which is ours, that we will not (if we may) suffer it to perish; euen our garments, and our houses, and our cattell, we haue a care to conserue them, because they are our owne: how great may we thinke is the Lords care toward his owne, whom he tenders with greater compalsion the any earthly father

Sith man is carefull to keep that which is his owne, shall we thinke that God loues not those who are his owne?

Every man can
not say to the
Lord, I am
thine.

Basil, in Ps. 119

Rom. 6. 16.

Ambrose.

Yea, rather
men now are so
profane, that e-
very kinde of
sine may say
vnto them,

Thou art mine.



Cent.

ther can doe to his children?

But howsoever this seeme *facilis vox & com-
munis, Tuus sum*: as easie a voyce as it is com-
mon, to say, *I am thine*; yet few are they, who
in a good conscience may say it. *Mentitur enim
peccator, si se seruum Dei nominet*: A man in
his sinnes, lies, if hee say that hee is the seruant of
God; for to what-euer thing a man giues obe-
dience, vnto that same is hee a seruant. O how
many people, and nations, and wealthy men
are there in the world, *Qui paupertatem
putant Domino seruire*, who thinke it a po-
uertie to serue GOD! Hee who is aboue all
seemes nothing to them: and they seeke other
things with such insatiable affection, as if the
Lorde Iesus, in whom are all things, were not
sufficient for them. Can these men say to the
Lord, *I am thine*?

But these men are not the worst: for yee shall
finde now a bastard Christian, so profane, that
when all vices are gathered, euery one may say to
him, *Thou art mine: Quomodo ergo qui huius-
modi est, potest dicere Christo, Tuus sum*? How
then may such a man as he say vnto Christ, *I am
thine*? Concupiscence, Auarice, Ambition, and
the rest vpon iust reasons of seruice, done by
him to them, challenge him to be theirs. Of
such a man it may be spoken that was said of *Con-
stantinus Copronymus; Eum nec Christianum esse,
nec Indaum, nec Paganum sed colluuiem quandam
imvietatis*.

impietatis, That he was neyther a Christian, nor a Jew, nor a Pagan; but a confused masse of all impietie. And how then can such a one say to the Lord, *I am thine?*

But if so they will say, let them receiue their answer; *Away ye workers of iniquitie*: hee is not alway mine, that saith Lorde, Lorde. Wicked men may so say, *Sed voce non corde*; but it is with their tongue, not with their heart. As *Iudas* euen then pretended that he was one of Christs, when Satan had entred into him: but the aduersary iustly might challenge him by the like of these speeches, which by *Ambrrose* properly are ascribed to him; *Non est Taus, Iesu, sed mens est: qua mea sunt, cogitat, qua mea sunt in pectore volutat, tecum epulatur, & mecum pascitur: à te panem; à me pecuniam accepit, tecum bibit, & mihi sanguinem tuum vendit*: He is not thine, said Satan to the Lord Iesus, he is mine; his thoughts and cogitations are mine; he eats with thee, but is fedde by me; he takes bread from thee, but mony from me; he drinkes with thee, and selles thy blood to me. A fearfull conuiction of men, who giue their word to Christ, professing his name; but their workes to Satan, doing what hee commaunds them. These men cannot say with *Dauid*, *I am thine, O Lord*.

For I haue sought.] See here how *Dauid* qualifies his protestation: from his earnest affection to the

How the Lord acknowledges not profane men to be his.

How Satan challenged Iudas as his owne



How Dauid
proues that he
was Gods
man.

the word of God, hee proues that hee was Gods man and his owne seruant. It is not wordes, but affections and actions, which must proue vs to be the Lords. *Tuus sum, quia id solum quod tuum est quasi mi:* I am thine, because I fought nothing but that which is thine, and how I might please thee. *Mibi in tuis iustificationibus est omne patrimonium:* in the obseruance of thy precepts is all my patrimony.

VER. 95. *The wicked haue waited for me, so destroy me: but I will consider thy Testimonies.*

A great miracle
that the sheepe
of Christ are
preserued in the
midst of rauen-
ing Wolues.

TWO things againe he notes in his enemies: diligence, in waiting all occasions whereby to doe him euill, and cruelty without mercy; for their purpose was to destroy him: wherein, still we see how restlesse and insatiable is the malice of the wicked against the godly. *Daniel* his preseruatiō in the Lions den was a great miracle: but it is no lesse a marvellous worke of God, that the godly who are the flock of Christ, are daily preserued, in the midst of the wicked; who are but rauening Wolues, & thirst for the blood of the Saints of God, hauing a cruell purpose in their heart if they might performe it, vterly to destroy them. When we see them disappointed, let vs giue thankses with the Iewes; *If the Lord had not beene on our side (may Israel*

now

now say) If the Lord had not beene on our side, when men rose up against vs, then had they swallowed vs quick, when their wrath was kindled against vs: but praised be the Lord, who hath not giuen vs a pray to their teeth.

But I will consider.] The cōsideration of Gods word, is a strong stay against all temptations. See verse 9. 15. 59. 95. 159.

Psal. 124.

VER. 96. I haue seene an end of all perfection: but thy commandements are exceeding large.

IN the conclusion of this Section, hee compares Gods word, with all other most perfect and excellent things that are in the vworld; and hee sheweth how they shall faile and vanish, but the word of the Lord endureth. *Nihil tam perfectum, vel absolutum est omni ex parte, quod finem suum non habeat.* Experience lets vs see this to be a truth: for there is no day so pleasant, but a night puts end to it; no Sommer so fruitful, but a barren Winter ouertakes it; no body so pleasant and liuely, but death destroyes it; frequent eating and drinking in the dayes of Noah, but the flood came and tooke them all away; great mirth among the Philistims vpon their Patrons holy-day, but their banquetting house became their buriall.

The vanitie & instabilitie of all earthly pleasures.



Iudg. 16.

Elay 14. 11.

Pſalm. 1.

A cleere declaration of the vanitie of this life.

Chryſ. in Math. hom. 24.



The word of God is called large, becauſe the comfort thereof indures. Euthy. in Pſalm. 119.

The Monarch of *Babel*, that golden head, had feet of clay, and in the end, wormes ſpred vnder him, and wormes couered him. All the pomp of the world is like the gourd of *Jonas*, flouriſhing one day, and fading another. The wind ſhall carry away the vngodly like chaffe: all their moſt perfect pleaſures, are like a light thing bound vp in the wings of the wind, which is eaſily carried away.

When we come to be men, we laugh at thoſe things wee did when we were children: for they, as wee ſee, take great delight to build houſes to themſelues in the ſtreets, of ſhells and ſtones, and delight to behold them; which albeit they were able to ſtand, yet could they not profit them. We are not yet come to the perfect age of Chriſtian men: but when we ſhall be, then ſhall wee vnderſtand how fooliſh now men are, whoſe care is to increaſe their rents, and enlarge their ſumptuous buildings, *Qua cinem cæli capere non poſſunt*: which cannot lodge a Citizen of heauen. Let vs therefore ſo uſe this world, as if wee vſed it not; poſſeſſing it ſo this day, as ready to part with it to morrow.

But thy commandements.] There's the other member of the oppoſition. Hee calls the commandements or word of God exceeding large; *Quia eos omnes recreat, & corda eorum dilatat, qui in anguſtijs, & afflictionibus verſantur*: becauſe it reſreſheth them all, and enlargeth their harts

harts who are in distresse and affliction. And againe, it is so large, that it hath none end, *Propter amplitudinem suam fideles nunquam deseret*: and the amplitude thereof is so great, that it neuer failes the faithfull. Worldly riches serue worldly men so long as they liue, and make some seruice also in conueying their bodies with a pompous funerall to the graue: but there it leaues them, and goes no further with them. Onely the word of God sustaines the godly against all tentations, so long as they liue; it conuoyes them vnto death; and the comfort thereof abides with them for euer when they are dissolued.

P 2

M E M.

Whē all world
ly comforts
faile.



M E M.

VER. 97. *Oh how lone I thy law ! It is my meditation continually.*

Many speake
that by cu-
stome, which
in conscience
they dare not
present vnto
God.

A great grace
to speake to god
fro an vpright
hart.



HE insists here still in the declaration of his earnest affectiō toward the word, and the notable fruites which he reaped thereby. His affection is declared, ver. 1. *Oh how lone I thy law !* Wherin ye see, hee calls God himselfe to be iudge of his loue to the word: *Nec speciem, sed plenitudinem charitatis tali conventionē testatur*; Witnessing thereby, that it was no counterfet loue, but compleat and sincere loue, which he bare vnto it. The like protestation was vsed by *S. Peter, Thou knowest, O Lord, that I loue thee.* It were good, that in things pertayning to godlinesse, wee did declare our vpright hart, by speaking as they spake. Sith at the length wee must be presented before him, and made manifest such as wee are, let vs in time present our selues vnto him: for many by custome speake that of themselves, which in conscience they durst not speake, beeing presented vnto God.

All

All that God craues of vs is loue. Therefore saith the Apostle, that the end or perfection of the law, τελος της νομμου, is loue: and againe, that loue is the fulfilling of the law. *Amari exigit, qui omnes amat, quia charitas est*: hee desires to bee loued of all, who loues all, because hee is loue it selfe. This one commaundement containes all; and it is most reasonable: for what excuse can a man bring for this, that he loues not God?

Yet many in word profess that they loue him, who loue not indeed. The triall of our loue to God, is our loue to his word, & our care to keep his commaundements. *If any loue mee, he will keepe my commaundements. Qui enim diligit ex voluntate facit, quae sibi sunt imperata.* This one triall conuinceth many to belyers, who say they loue God, and yet delight not in his word, nor are carefull to obey him.

It is my meditation continually.] Hee proues that which hee hath spoken. The nature of loue is, that it is euer thinking of the thing beloued, and vseth all meanes to obtaine it. Strong loue is like fire, that cannot be quenched with much water. So *Dauid* proues his loue to God, by his loue to Gods word; and his loue to Gods word, by his continuall meditation in it: no change of other exercises could make him forget it.

Marke againe the meanes, by which (after *Dauids* exāple) we must grow in the knowledge of

God craues nothing of man but loue.

1. Tim. 1.
Ambr. in *Plal.*
119.

We are inexcusable if wee excuse it not.

How loue to God may be tryed.

The nature of loue, it cannot lurk, but will tell where it is.

Means to grow
in grace, are
meditation,
prayer, thank-
giving, & con-
ference.



the word of God: First, meditation of that which wee haue heard or read. Secondly, prayer for grace to belieue and practice it. Thirdly, thanksgiving for grace receiued. Fourthly, godly conference thereof, one of vs with another. All these shal a man find carefully practiced by *Dauid*. And truly, the greatest cause, why now there being so much preaching, there is so little profiting in godlinesse, is, that men before hearing, prepare not; in hearing, pray not; after hearing, neither meditate thereof in themselves; nor speak thereof vnto others.

VER. 98. By thy cōmandement; thou hast made me wiser then my enemies: for they are euer with me.

Dauid cōpares
himselfe with
three sorts of
men, his ene-
mies, his tea-
chers, and the
ancient.

Not to com-
mend himselfe
but the word of
God.

NOw he prayeth the word for the singular profit & fruit which he reaped by it; to weet, that he learned wisdom by it. And this he amplifies, by cōparing himselfe with three sorts of men: his enemies; his teachers; and the ancients. And this he doth, not of vaine glorie: for bragging is farre from him who is gouerned by the Spirit of grace; but to commend the word of the Lord, and to allure others to loue it, by declaring to them, what manifold good hee found in it.

Wiser then mine enemies.] But how can this be? seeing our Saviour saith, that The men of this world,

world, are wiser in their owne generation then the children of God. The answer is, Our Sauior doth not call worldlings wise men, simply; but *wiser* in their owne generation: that is, wise in things pertaining to this life. Or as *Ieremie* calls them, *Wise to doe euill*: and when they haue so done, wise to conceale and cloak it. All which in very deed is but folly: & therefore, *Dauid*, who by the light of Gods word saw that it was so, could not be moued to follow their course. Well; there is a great controuersie between the godly, & the wicked: either of them in their iudgement, account the other to be fooles; but it is the light of Gods word which must decide it.

Worldlings, in what respect they are called wise.

Time will try whether they or the godly be more wise.

VER. 99. *I haue had more vnderstanding then my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.*

HEere is the second amplification; That the word of God had made him wiser then his teachers: which might indeed seem to be *Incongrua presumptio*. Where note stil hee is magnifying not himselfe, but the grace of God toward him. It is no new thing, to see many teachers often pretending to learne others, that which they haue not learned themselves: and who can tell how miserable these men are, who will be Doctors, but not disciples; teaching others, but not taught of God themselves, because they are not carefull to learne from him?

Godly men tel what they are, but not of presumption.

Nazian.
He is not meet
to be a teacher
of Christians,
who is not a
disciple of
Christ.

*Ambr. lib. 1.
off. cap. 1.*

Macar. ho. 16.



That God giues
more grace by
an instrument,
then the instru-
ment hath,

To such, saith *Nazianz.* Our Lord was 30. yeers old, ere hee beganne to be a Preacher: *Et tu magister vis fieri, antequam discipulus:* and thou wilt be a master of Christians, before thou be a scholar of Christ.

Vnus verus est Magister, qui solus non didicit, quod omnes doceret: ceteri omnes discant prius quod doceant, & ab illo accipiant, quod alijs tradant: There is one true Master, who teacheth all, and learnes of none: as for all others, they must first learne what they should teach, and receiue from him, that which they should deliuer vnto others.

But alas! *Quam multi sunt, qui sermone valent, & loquuntur, non tamen sale caelesti conditi sunt, recensentque multa de mensa regia, quorum nullum adepti sunt gustum!* How many are powerfull in speech, who are not seasoned with heavenly salt; rehearsing many delicacies which are on the table of the heavenly King, whereof they neuer tasted themselves!

More wise was the holy Apostle, who subdued his body by discipline, least while as he preached to others, he should haue beene a reprobate himselfe. God grant that wee may follow his example.

And yet euen where the Preacher is godlie, partaker of that grace himselfe, whereof hee is an Embassadour to others, it falls out oftentimes, that greater measure of light and grace,

is communicated by his ministrie to another, then is giuen to himselfe. As *Augustine*, first illuminated and conuerted by *Ambrose*, did far excell, both in knowledge and spirituall grace, him that taught him.

And heerein God wonderfully shewes his glory, That whosoever be the instrument, he is the dispenser of light and glorie; giuing more by the instrument, then it hath in it selfe. And this is so farre from beeing to a godly Teacher a matter of griefe, that it is rather a matter of glory.

The wicked glory, to make others more wicked then themselves; as our Sauior said the Pharisees did with the Proselyts, that they made them tenne times more the children of Satan, then themselves: and shall the godly grudge, to see that they haue made others more godly then themselves? Nay truely: but rather such, vnto them are their crowne and ioy, that they may glory in, as in a prey which they bring to him that sent them. For, as the Doue which *Noah* sent forth, returned to him again with the branch of an Oliue in her mouth: so all godly Preachers which are come from God, and remember they must return to him againe, are most ioyful, when they see they haue some prey-conquest by their ministrie, and that they haue neither run nor laboured in vaine.

proves that hee
is the dispenser
of grace.



Sith the wicked
glory to make
others more
wicked, shal we
grudge, that o-
thers by vs are
made more
learned & god-
ly then our
selues?

Ver.

How youth &
old age are to
be considered.

A warning to
aged men.

VER. 1. 20. I understood more then the Ancients; because I kept thy precepts.

THe third poynt of his comparison is heere. Wherein we see, how it is neither learning, nor experience gottē by length of time, which makes a man wise; but onely the word of God, vsed with meditation, prayer, and practice: for wisdom is not alway with the ancient. He is not young in Gods estimation, whose wisdom is ripe: and it is not by number of yeeres, but by solid and settled manners, that the Spirit of God esteemes men to be ancient. Alwaies heere, *David* speakes of men growne in yeeres, but not in knowledge: whom *Philo* properly called, *Grandænos pueros*. And indeed, it is pitie to see any man foolish through the ignorance of God; but greatest pitie, to see aged men bring their daies to an end, and draw neere to the graue, before they haue learned to consider, eyther the end for which they came into the world, or to knowe the state into which they shall be translated, when they goe out of it.

VER.

VER. 101. *I haue refrained my feete from euerie euill way, that I might keepe thy word.*

D Auids wisdome, which hee learned by the word, consisted not in naked speculation, but in practice: this is wisdom, to refraine from euill. Our greatest perfection on earth, stands in resisting sinne. Wee are neuer without a tempter to sin; nor yet without some occasion of sinne; and which is worst of all, neuer without the seed of sinne in our selues: which is fruitfull, in sending forth *Capiditates & motus qui irruūt sicut bestia in nos, ut teneros fructus & noua ruris nostri culta depascant*: such lusts & motions, that like vnto wild beasts, make incursion vpon vs, to destroy the tender fruit of this new husbandry of God within vs: for which we haue need continually and carefully to resist them.

From euery euill way.] Hee knowes not what it is to resist sin, who resists not euery sin. It is true that all sins are not alike subdued in vs; for some affections are stronger then other: but if against them all we fight not, seeking to refraine our feet from euery euill way, wee cannot walke in the way of God. *Nequit enim fieri ut duas quisquam vias simul ingrediatur; iustitia videlicet, et iniustitia.* This is to bee marked of some professors of this age, who will bee counted good Christians; notwithstanding it bee manifest, there are some grosse euills, from the which they

To resist sinne, not to want sin, is our greatest perfection on earth.

Amb. in Psalm. 119.

Hee can resist no sinne, who resists not all sinne.



Euery sin recei-
ued within vs,
opens the dore
to another.

they will not refraine. Though wee subdue no sinne as we should, yet must we remember, that euery sinne, in some measure, must bee resisted: other wise, if we be captiued of any one, it is sufficient to destroy vs.

That I might keepe thy word.] The resistance of euill, makes vs the stronger and more able to keepe Gods word: on the contrary, euery transgression diminisheth our spirituall light and strength. So that by sinning, we not only contract a new guiltines vpon our soules, but weaken our own strength: for so soon as any one sin, be it neuer so small, gettes vantage ouer vs, it prepares a way to another and a greater.

Our naturall
inabilitie to
good.

VER. 102. *I haue not declyned from thy iudgements; because thou didst teach me.*

L East it shold seem that *Dauid* ascribed the praise of godlines to himselfe; or that it came from any goodnes in him, that hee did refraine his feet from euery euil way: he giues here all the glory to God; protesting, that bicause God did teach him, therefore hee declined not. Wherof we learn, that if at any time we stand, or if when we haue fallen, we rise & repent, it is euer to be imputed to God that teacheth vs; for there is no euil so abhominable, but it would soone become plausible to vs, if God should leaue vs to our selfe.

For

For thou taught'st me.] David was taught by his ordinary Teachers, and hee did reuerence them; but that he profited by them, he ascribes vnto God: Paul may plant, and Apollo water; God must giue the increase.

They onely learne who are taught of God.

VER. 103. *How sweet are thy promises to my mouth! yea, more then hony to my mouth.*

Gods teaching workes euer in the heart a feeling of that which is taught: for hee writes his lawe in the hearts of his children. And this is it which *David* here protests, that he found a sweetnes in Gods word, w^{ch} exceeded the sweetest things in the world. And the cause why many in this age feele it not, is eyther because their conscience is euil, & so *intellectuali-bus anima sensibus non poller*, they want the intellectuall senses of the soule (for as to a sicke man, that w^{ch} is sweet seems sowre and vngratious; so to an ill conscience, the most comfortable word of God becomes terrible;) or else, albeit the conscience be not so euill, yet no paines are taken by meditation and prayer to searcho out the comfort of the word. For as Minerals are not gotten on the superfiice of the earth, but men must digge deepe into the bosome thereof before they finde them; and as the sweetnesse of a kirknell cannot be felt where the shell is not broken: so cannot the

God when he teaches speaks to the heart.

Enthym.
The causes why many now profit not by hearing of the word.



A Christian
apprehends
good offered
in the word,
not with one,
but all his
leaves.

Since Gods pro-
mises are sweet,
how sweet will
their perfor-
mance be?

1. Cor. 3. 9.

the comforts of Gods word be felt of them, who looke but lightly and superficially into it.

But what is the reason of this kinde of speech, that Gods word was sweet to his mouth, seeing words are not discerned by the mouth, but by the eare? The answer is, that a spirituall man apprehends the good w^{ch} God offers, with all his senses: he not onely heares it, but smells it, toucheth it, tastes it, and so eates and digests it, that he feedes vpon it. And againe, the reason is, for that *David* being taught of God, delighted to speake of Gods word to others; and the more he spake of it, the sweeter he found it.

And heere is our comfort; that if the promises of God be so sweet, what sweetnesse shall we finde in the performance of them? When a man of honour promiseth vs any excellent thing, it makes glad our heart; but when he gives it, it doth much more reioyce vs. The promises of God are excellent; but the promised things are such, as by no word can be expressed: *For the eye of man hath not scene, his eare hath not heard, neither can his heart understand (now) those things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

VER. 104. *By thy precepts I haue gotten understanding; therefore I hate all wayes of falsehood.*

IN this last Verse he commends the word, from a two-fold excellent benefit which he reaped
by

by it: for he not onely got by it vnderstanding to his minde, but sanctification to his affections.

In the beginning of the Section he protested that he loued the word of God: and now in the end of it, hee protests hee hated all the wayes of falshood. Here is a triall of our true loue to God: if we hate every thing that is contrary to it; whether it be a false Religion, or euill manners. This convinces the lukewarme professors of this age, who say they loue God and his word; when in the meane time, they are companions to idolators, they take part with adulterers, they runne with theeuces, they drinke with drunkards, they blaspheme with blasphemers, and they hate not the workes of them that fall away.

Two great benefits David got by the word.

Lukewarme professors of this age convinced.



N V N.

VER. 105. *Thy word is a Lanterne vnto my feet,
and a light to my pathes.*

The word of
God compared
to a Lanterne.

Euthym in Psal.
119.

I
Because it sheweth
light in
darkenesse.

2
We shall see it
by when we
come home.

Reuel. 22. 5.
The light of
the Gospell is
clearer then the
light of the
Lawe.



He use of a Lanterne, is in the darke
night; for no man will carrie it when
the Sunne shineth clearly. *David* here
protests, what a Lanterne is to men in
darknesse, the same the word of God was to him
in his pilgrimage. *In nocte huius presentis vite*,
in the night of this present life, it shewed him the
right way, to leade him forward to his desired
and determinate end. And as men when they
come to their lodging, require no more the help
of the Lanterne; so shall we, when we shall finish
our pilgrimage, and shall come to our heauenly
Ierusalem, not the any more stand in need of this
ministeriall light: there shall bee no Sunne nor
Candle there; *The Lord is the light of that Citie.*

Basil makes heere a comparison betweene the
Lawe and the Gospell; and thinkes that the Law
is called a Lanterne, because it did but illuminate
the house of Israel: but Christ Iesus, the *Sonne of
righteousnesse*, by his light of the Gospell, hath il-
luminate

illuminate all the houses and families of the earth. It is true indeed, the light of the Gospel is both cleerer and larger then the light of the law: but that which heere *David* speaks, doth properly belong to the whole word of God; as *S. Peter* saith, *It is as a light shining in darknes, to the which we shall doe well to take heed.*

Alway we see the necessitie of the word of God; and how impossible it is for men to direct their waies aright without it. As the Sun is necessary for the day, & the Moone for the night; and as in a darke house, nothing can be seene without a Lanterne or candle: so cannot the right way, be discerned from the wrong, in this darknes of our life, without the light of the word. *Multa fovee, multi scopuli in istius seculi caligine non videntur; praefert tibi lucernam, quam Propheta monstravit:* there are many pits in this mistie world, many rocks in this turbulent sea, which are not seene; carie before thee this Lanterne. *Nullicredas tuum, nisi praecunte lucerna istius luce, processum:* Credit not thy steppes to any, vnlesse the light of this Lanterne goe before to direct thee.

David was a man of very good wit, and naturall vnderstanding: but he giues to God this glorie, that his best light was but darknesse, when he was not lightned and ruled by the word of God. Oh that wee could consider this, that in all our waies wherein the word of God shines not vnto

2. Pet. 1. 19.

As the Sun is necessary for the day, so the light of the word to direct our way.

Ambr. in Psal. 119.

Ambrose.

Our waies are in darknesse without the word.

As Israels
course in the
wildernes was
directed by the
Lord, so should
ours be.

As a mā lights
one light at an-
other, so should
we light our
minds at the
word.



vs, to direct vs, wee doe but walke in darknesse: and our waies without it, can lead vs to none other end, but vtter darknes. If we hearken not to the word of G O D, if wee walke not by the rule thereof, how is it possible wee can come to the face of God?

Israel in the wildernes were gouerned by a clowde in the day, and by a pillar of fire in the night: their campe was raised and settled, as God gaue them the signe, till at length they came to *CANAAN*. Happy shall we be, if so our life be gouerned in all the course thereof, that our resting and remoouing, our going in, and going out, and all that we do, may be ordered by the Lords direction: for so shall he bring vs at length to his promised *CANAAN*.

But that this may be done, let vs remember, that as a man lighteth one light at another: so we must seeke to haue the light of our mind illuminated by the light of the word. *Ex hac lucerna accende et tu lucernam, vt luceat interior oculus tuus, qui lucerna est tui corporis*: At this Lanterne of the word, light thou the Lantern of thy mind; that the interior eye, which is the light of the whole body, may shine cleerly.

VER. 106. *I haue sworne, and will performe it; that I will keepe thy righteous iudgements.*

THis verse contains a protestation of *Dauids* resolution, to walke in Gods obedience; and not a naked protestation, but confirmed by an oath: which in effect is no other thing, but a ratification of his promise which he made in circumcision; to weet, that hee should serue God, as one of his people. And this kind of oath whereby we confirme our harts to doe that which wee haue promised, according to Gods words, as it is *et iudicium scientia, & testimoniū conscientia*, both a testimony of our science, and a testimonie of our conscience, that we know we should doe so, and therefore resolute we will doe it: so is it a necessary help of our great weaknes, who are ready either to forget and not remember; or if we remember, to faile and not perform. For remedie whereof, it is good that by an holy oath we should strengthen our selues to the performance of that dutie, which once by the light of God we haue resolved.

O! but heere the weake conscience wil obiect and say, If I swear and afterward faile, doe I not increase my guiltinesse? But to such it is answered, Shal we neuer resolute doe good, yea, and to confirme our selues by an oath to do it, because we are infirm, & faile in many things, and can not

Dauids resolution confirmed by an oath.

A godly oath a necessary helpe of our great weaknes. *Ambr.* in Psal. 119.

The obiection of a weak conscience concerning an oath.

Why we should
not cease to cō-
firm our good
purposes by an
oath, albeit we
be weake in
performing.



Gods word,
why called his
iudgement.

bring our good purposes to perfection? Or shall we think, that euery faile in our particular duties, against our resolution, our promise, yea, & against our oath, is alway a falling away frō the couenant, which by our great oath in Baptisme wee once ratified. No, no: for the certaintie and continuance of this couenant, is not grounded on vs, but vpon God himselfe. It falls not by our falling: but wee rise againe, and stand by the stabilitie thereof; *Because I am not changed, yee are not consumed.* Thirdly, albeit of infirmities, there be many failes in performance of our promise and oath, yet is there any renouncing of it? God forbid: but these same sinnes where-into wee fall, make vs the more ashamed of our selues; the more afraid of our weakenes; the more earnest to renew our former resolution; and the more careful to call vpon God, for grace to performe it.

Thy righteous iudgements.] So David stiles the word of God, because it iudgeth most righteously between right and wrong, truth and falshood. And secondly, because according to the iudgement giuen therein, God will doe. Let vs take heede vnto it: for the word containes a catalogue of such as shall not inherite the kingdom of God; and another of such as shall dwell in Gods tabernacle: let vs read and see, in which of the two catalogues our selues are; for according to that word will the iudgement goe.

VER.

VER. 107. *I am very sore afflicted, O Lord: quicken me according to thy word.*

THe godly, in al their troubles make their recourse to God; in most homely manner pouring out their griefes in his bosome: so that I may well say, there are none in earth, nay, nor the most deare vnto them, to who they can speake so familiarly, as vnto the Lord their God. Their wants, their weakenes, their griefe, their sinnes, wherof they think shame to speake to others, they think not euill homelie to communicate to him. But as *Moses* in all his troubles, ranne euer to the dore of the tabernacle; so they to the throne of grace: and happy are they, who close not this doore vpon themselves by their sinnes.

Againe, we are still remembred, that afflictions are no arguments of Gods hatred, but rather of his loue. A father that spares the rodde, hates his child; *Nunquid non frequentius corripitur filius quam seruus?* Is not the son oftner chastised then the seruant? It is the voice of our heavenly father, *Quos diligo, castigo: if yee be without correction, ye are bastards, and not sonnes.* Where the Physician refuseth to giue medicine, it is a token there is no hope of life: & where the Lord giues a man loose reanes & liberty, to goe where hee pleaseth, not hedging in his waies with thornes, as he promi-

How familiar the godly are, in declaring their griefes to the Lord.

Afflictions no arguments of hatred.
Amb. in Psalm. 119.

Heb. 12.
By the contrary, impunitie & libertie to sin, is an argumēt of Gods anger.
Hosea 2.

The state of
the godly in
trouble, & after
trouble, to be
distinguished.

Hebr. 12.

Two great
motives to pa-
tience in trou-
ble.

Yatab.

It is a great fa-
vour that the
Lord accepts
any thing from
vs, and that in
three respects.

miseth to his *Israel*, it is an argument of his great displeasure. But seeing hee protested before, it was good for him, that God afflicted him; how doth hee now complaine? The answer is, that there is a great difference between the sense of the godly in trouble, and after it: *For no chastisement is sweet for the present; but afterward, it brings the quiet fruit of righteousness, to them who are thereby exercised.*

Sore afflicted.] Two things should reſtraine vs from cōplaining of the greatnes of our trouble. First, if wee consider it is measured by the Lord; who is faithfull, and wil lay no more vpon vs, then we are able to beare. And next, that our stripes are not according to our sinnes: for if hee should beat vs with as many rodde, as wee haue grieved him with sinnes, he should adde yet tenne times more to all our greatest afflictions.

Quicken me.] *Defatigas vires meas restitue, sicut pollicitus es.* Restore my decayed strength, as thou hast promised. Hee confesseth, he was almost dead by the greatnes of his trouble. But of this, see ver. 17. 77. 116.

VER. 108. *O Lord, I beseech thee, accept the free offerings of my mouth, & teach me thy iudgments.*

IT is a great grace, that the Lord should accept any thing from vs, if we consider these three things: First, who the Lord is. Next, what

what we are. Thirdly, what it is we haue to giue vnto him. As for the Lord, he is All sufficient, & stands in need of nothing wee can giue him. *Our goodnes extends not to the Lord.* As for vs, we are poore creatures, liuing by his liberalitie: yea, begging from all the rest of his creatures; from the sunne and moone; from the ayre, the water, and the earth; from fowles and fishes; yea, from the worms: some giue vs light; some meat; some cloth; and are such beggers as we, meet to giue to a King.

And thirdly, if wee well consider, What is it that we giue? Haue we any thing to giue, but that which wee haue receiued from him? and whereof wee may say with *Dauid*; *O Lord, all things are of thee: and of thine owne hand haue wee giuen thee againe.* Let this humble vs, and restraîne vs from that vaine conceit of meriting at Gods hand.

Of my mouth.] *Dauid* at this time, in his great necessitie, hauing no other sacrifice to offer vnto the Lord, offers him the calues of his lippes; but no doubt, when he might, he offred more.

There is nothing so small, but if it come from a good heart, God will accept it: the widowes myte; a cup full of cold water; yea & the praise of our lippes, although it haue no other external oblation ioyned with it: but, where men may doe more and will not, it is an argument their heart is not sincerelie affected toward him,

1. If we consider who the Lord is.

Psalme 16.

2. If we consider who our selues are.

3. If wee consider what our oblation is.

1. Chron. 29.

No gift so small, if it come from a good hart, but God accepts it.

A reproofe of
them, vvho
praise not God
with their lips.

And of the also,
who offer ser-
uice of their
words, not of
their hartes vnto
him.

Mich. 6. 7.

The godly mā
hath his life al-
way ready in
his hand, to of-
fer to the Lord.

and their praises are not welcome to him.

And such as haue libertie to come to the holie assemblies, and offer not there the praises of their mouth to God, but sit as if they were dumbe; as also they that offer naked words, without the willing heart, are here much more conuincied. They were great beasts vnder the law, that thought to please God, by offering a beast vnto him, keeping back themselves: and they are greater beasts vnder the Gospel, that will giue their hart to another, and thinke to please God, by giuing some other gifts vnto him.

Will the Lord be pleased vvith thousands of Rammes, or vvith tenne thousand riuers of Oyle? Shall I giue him my first borne for my transgression? or the fruit of my wombe, for the sinne of my soule? Is it such sacrifices will please the Lord? No, if thou wilt not offer thy selfe vnto him, hee will haue nothing that is thine.

VER. 109. *My soule is continually in my hand: yet doe I not forget thy law.*

THis verse hath a renouation of his former protestation; with an amplification, that he would keep it, albeit he was daily in peril of his life: and was also resolved & readie to lay it downe. For so this phrase imports, when he saith he had his soule in his hand, ready to giue when

when euer God should take it. And this is to be obserued, that there is no trouble so ready to take away the life of Gods children, as they are ready to giue it. As *Elyah* came out to the mouth of his caue to meet with the Lord; and *Abraham* stood in the doore of his tabernacle to speake to the Angel: so the soule of the godly, stands ready in the doore of the tabernacle of this body, to remooue when the Lord shall commaund it: whereas the soule of the wicked lies back, hiding it selfe, as *Adam* among the bushes; and is taken out of the body perforce: as was the soul of that worldling, *This night they will take thy soule from thee*: but they neuer sacrifice their soules willingly to the Lord.



It is far otherwise with the wicked.

VER. 110. *The wicked haue laid a snare for mee: but I swarmed not from thy precepts.*

D*avid* continueth his complaint to God against the malice of his enemies; but changeth the stiles hee gaue them: and now hee calls them wicked men; which importeth three things. First, they worke wickednes. Secondly, they loue it. Thirdly, they perseuere in it.

The godly want not their owne sinnes; but this wickednes is far from them: for when they sin, they are rather like men oppressed, & forced against

Three things concur in wickednes.

Which are not
in the godly.

against their will, to doe what they will not, then otherwise, workers with their will. And if at any time they doe euill, they continue not in it, but rise againe by repentance: so that their sins, are rather sinnes of weakenes, then of wickednes.

Constancie of
Christians.

Yet haue I not swarued.] The constancie of the godlie, is tryed by trouble; when neither the euill example of the wicked can infect, nor their cruell persecutions can enforce them, to follow them in euill: but rather, the more they are troubled, the faster they cleaue to the Lord; and the more they see the impietie of euill men, the more they are confirmed to be good.

V ER. III. Thy testimonies haue I taken as an heritage for euer: for they are the ioy of mine hart.

Excellencie of
Gods word a-
boue all other
things.
Phil. 3. 8.

THere is nothing in the earth so excellent, but if it be compared with Christ Iesus, it is, as the Apostle saith, *but dung*. Such is the estimation of all the godly: when they compare the word of God, with other most precious things, they account them of no price in comparison of it. The hony, and hony-combe, hath no sweetnes, when it is compared with the comfortable word of God: all treasures of gold and siluer are nothing to it; yea, the kingdome of *Canaan* made him not so ioyfull as did the vvord of *G O D*; which hee esteemed his greatest inheritance.

tance. For beside the present comfort it renders vnto vs, it is the Charter sealed and confirmed by God; by Sacraments sealed; by the oath of God ratified; with the blood of Christ subscribed: whereby we are made sure of our heauenlie inheritance.

But alas! by most part of men it is not regarded; they preferre their trifles before it. Take from them a foote breadth of their earthly inheritance, they shew such a carnall zeale, as stirres them vp to hazard their liues in defence of it: take from them the comfort of Gods vvord, they regard not; neither are they any more touched there-with, then if it did not concerne them. And all the cause heereof proceeds from this; that they neuer found the ioy of this word in their harts, as *Dauid* heere saith: for according to euery man his feeling of the comfort which is in it, so doth hee esteeme of it.

VER. 112. *I haue applyed mine hart to fulfill thy statutes alway, vnto the end.*

HE concludes this Section, with a protestation of his constant & sincere affection toward the word of God. Where first, it comes to be considered, seeing the hart of man is in the hand of God, and that man is not able to change a haire of his head, farre lesse the

It is the sure Charter of our heauenly inheritance.

The contempt of Gods word reproveth.



Seeing mans hart is not in his owne hand, how saith Dauid, he had applyed his hart?

How a man after grace received, works his own saluation.

Basil. in Psalm
119.

The godly fail
in performāce,
not in purpose.



Beginnings of
good are no-
thing without
perseuerance.

Greg. moral.

the affections of his hart; how saith he, that hee had applied his hart to Gods statutes?

The answer ariseth from distinguishing these two-fold estates. A man before his conuersion is dead in sinne and trespasses, and can doe no good, till GOD strengthen him: but after conuersion, hee becomes, by grace, a worker vvith GOD, to stirre and incline the heart toward God.

Anima consilium lanci est simile: the counsel of the soule is like to a balance: *et mens imperium nata, lancem ad ea quæ meliora sunt inclinat*: and the mind, which hath gotten the commaunding power ouer the affections, inclines the balance to that which is best.

To fulfill.] Hee affirmes not any time that in practice hee did fulfill Gods law, but in purpose. In resolution hee euer willed and desired: and albeit hee failed many times in performance, yet neuer did he change his purpose.

To the end.] *Dauid's* godly motions vv ere not taken by starts: hee was no Temporizer, whose goodnesse is like the morning dewe. The seede of Gods vvord was deeper rooted in his heart: as hee had a care to beginne well; so also to continue well. *Frustra velociter currit, qui priusquam ad metam veniat, defecit*: Our life on earth is a race; in vaine beginnes hee to runne swiftly, that fainteth, and giues ouer before hee come to the end.

And

And this was signified (saith *Gregory*) when in the Lawe the tayle of the beast was sacrificed with the rest; Perseuerance crownethall. It is good we haue begun to do well; let vs also strue to perseuere to the end.

S A-



S A M E C H.

VER. 113. *I hate vaine inuentions; but thy lawe doe I loue.*

In trouble
mans comfort
consists in one
of these two:
1. A by-gon
good life.

2. Or else a pre-
sent vnfaigned
repentance.

Three things
in sinne to be
eschued.



HE comfort of all men in time of trouble, consists in one of these two; eyther in the by-gon testimony of a good conuersation, which vpheld *Iob* in the time of his affliction: or else, in the certainty of a present vnfaigned repentance. The last is good enough, if it come in time; but the first is more sure: and it is a great folly for a man to liue vncertaine of that wherein stands his comfort. When neyther thy conscience witnesseth, that thou hast liued as thou shouldest, nor yet that thou hast repented for doing that which thou shouldest not; where can thy comfort be? Learn both of *Iob* and *Dauid*, that in one of these two thy comfort must stand in the time of trouble: and our comfort shall be the greater, if we ioyne them together; euer sorrowing for sinne; euer studying to glorifie God, by the amendment of our wayes.

Vaine inuentions.] A godly man hates not only the

the execution of euill, but the inuention. In a sin there be three things would be carefully looked vnto: the occasion, the beginning of it, and the perfection or accomplishment thereof. The occasion would carefully be preuented: for hee hates not sinne, who feares not and hates not euery occasion of sinne. And from time once we feele any strength of it, that the monster of corrupt nature begins to shoot out any of her heads into vs, we should resist it in the beginning: for he is worthy to be stung to death by a Serpent, who may, and will not slay it when it is young. So should we neuer suffer it to come to perfection; otherwise it will slay vs: *For sinne persfited, brings out death.*

Since *Adams* first transgression, his children haue grown more and more learned in the inuentions of euill: so that now men be not cōtent with euill practised before them; but new sorts of sin, and new wayes of wickednesse are found out. Thus shall the world grow in euill, till the harvest of sinne be ripe: and then shall the Lord put in the hook of his vengeance, and cast all the wicked into the wine-press of his wrath.

It is a dangerous thing to sinne any manner of way; but it is diuellish to invent sinne: for this is to sinne after the similitude of Satan; he saw no sinne before him, himselfe was the first father and forger of it. Let men beware of this; lest they also be punished after the similitude of his condemnation.

Ver.

1. The occasiō.

2. The beginning of it.

3. The perfection.
Iam, x. 15.

Men grow more skillfull in sinning then they were before.

In most desperate dangers
God comes
with vnlooked
for deliuerances.

VER. 114. *Thou art my refuge and shield: and I trust in thy word.*

HEe makes heere a secret opposition betwene the armour of the wicked, by which they impugned him; and his armor, wherby he defended himselfe. As for them, by their worldly wisdom they are subtil in inventing wayes to hurt, and craftily lay many snares wherein to trap me; but my defence is in thee onely. *David* was in many most desperate dangers, and still he found the Lord providing vnlooked-for deliuerances: the strong Cittie of *Keilah* could not defend him; the Lord warned him to come out of it, and he was a shield vnto him: the solitarie Wildernesse of *Maon* could not secure him; for euen there *Saul* and his souldiers had compassed him: but God had a care of him, and turned his pursuers another way. These by-gone experiences of Gods louing care and fauour towards him, doe now confirme him to rest in God: how many wayes soeuer his enemies pursue him, he will still make the Lord his refuge and shield, and trust in his word.

VER. 115. *Away from me yee wicked: for I will keepe the commandments of my God.*

AS before he protested that he would cleaue vnto God; so now that he will sunder from the

the wicked. True fellowship with God binds vs to diuide our hearts from all them who will not walk Gods way: and therefore this is brought in as a sufficient reason of improbation against the wicked, to proue they were not the Lords, because, saith the Lord, *if thou see a thiefe, thou runnest with him, and art companion with the adulterers: what then hast thou to doe, to take my ordinances in thy mouth?*

Euery mans company wherein he delights, may tell what maner of man he is himselfe. As Rauens flock together by companies, and Doues flie together, and beasts of the earth gather themselves toother of their own kinds: so wicked men loue the company of wicked, and godly men through grace, delight in the fellowship of such as are like them. Which is not so to be vnderstood, as if in regard of personall conuersation, we behoued to separate from the wicked: for so, as saith the Apostle, we should goe out of the world; but euen in the midst of their company we must separate from them, both in fashions and affections, as we see Lot did in Sodome.

And this David did for two causes: First, for offences don against God, he withdrew himselfe from the company of the wicked; for their sport and pleasure is in those things, which grieve the spirit of the Lord. Sure it is, he neuer loued God, who mislikes not men for offending God: *Doe I not hate them that hate thee? Doe I not*

R

contend

Why our hearts should be diu-
ded from wicked men.

1st al. 50.

Euery mans
company tells
what he is.

Wicked company
forborne
for two causes:
1. Because they
offend God.

Psal. 139.

1. For feare
they hurt vs.

How euery
company
warnes vs to
walke circum-
spectly.
Psab.

Wicked com-
pany not meet
for godly men,
and why.

Hethat knows
God to be his
God, by no
means can be
sundered from
him.

contend with them who contend with thee? I
hate them as if they were mine utter enemies. The
other cause is the feare of his owne infirmities,
lest by the exāple of the wicked, either he should
be allured to euill, or relented to good.

For euery company warnes vs to walke in
feare and trembling; *Quoniam undiq; scandala
nos obsident, & innumeris vitijs refertus est mun-
dus, quæ extinguunt, vel saltem corrumpunt in no-
bis legem Dei, & legis studium*: On euery hand
we are compassed with stumbling blocks, & the
world is replenished with innumerable euils,
which eyther extinguish or corrupt in vs the stu-
die of Gods lawe; and for which we haue neede
to walke circumspectly: if we be in the company
of godly men, we should watch ouer our wordes
and wayes, lest we offend them: and if we also be
in the company of the wicked, we should like-
wise feare, lest we be offended or infected by
them.

For I will keep the commandments of my God.]
There is the reason of his protestation. Your
course and mine are contrary: I haue resolved to
walke another way, then the way wherein I see
ye are walking; and therefore your company is
not for me.

Of my God.] As a man can esteeme of any
thing which he knowes is his owne; so if once
he know that God is his, he cannot but loue him,
and carefully obey him: neyther is it possible
that

that any man can giue to God hearty and permanent seruice, who is not perswaded to say with *Dauid*, *He is my God*. All the pleasures, all the terrours of the world cannot sunder that soule from God, who can truly say, *The Lord is my God*.

Againe, a true Christian hath nothing in the world, wherein he can reioyce, as in his owne; but only in the Lord his God. A worldling will speake with *Nabal*; *My flesh and my bread*: and with *Nebuchadnezer*; *Is not this my Palace?* and, with *Alcibiades*, boast of their Rent. A Christian hath none of these of his owne, but useth them like moucables: a mans own flesh, yea, his owne heart, his friends, and all that he hath will faile him. To these a Christian will neuer say, *They are mine*: but, *God is the strength of mine heart, and my portion for euer*.



A Christian hath nothing wherein he reioyceth as in his owne, but the Lord.

Psal. 73. 26.

VER. 116. *Stablish me according to thy promise, that I may liue: & disappoint me not of my hope.*

D*Dauid* after his former resolution turnes him to prayer: for our intentions and conclusions are nothing, except the Lord blesse them; and therefore now *Dauid* craveth that God would stablish him.

The godly are subiect to a two-fold instability: the first is, a wauering from a constant belee-

Prayer strengthens all our good intentions.

A two-fold instability incident to godly men.

1. One of faith.

2. The other of
loue and obe-
dience.Adam indued
with many
graces, but not
with perseue-
rance.

uing of Gods promises. And this is an instability of faith: not that I think the faith of a man regenerate can faile; but because oft-times it is sore combred, & shaken with the winde of manifold tentations. Who can tell how many wayes Gods children are tempted with vnbeliefe? It may truly be said, that he nere knew what it is to belecue, who knowes not what it is to wrestle with vnbeliefe: great neede therefore haue we to pray with *Dauid, Lord stablish me;* and with that Father interceding for his sonne in the Gospell, *O Lord I beleue, helpe thou my vnbeliefe.*

The other is an instability of loue & obedience: for the godly finde their hearts many times carried away by externall allurements, to a forgetfulness of the Lord their God, and there-thorough also to an offending him. Alas, how unstable a thing is the heart of man by nature! euery object inangles it, and it is ready to goe a whooring after euery creature, vnlesse that golden nayle of the holy loue and feare of God bee drinen into it. And in this respect also we haue great neede to pray with *Dauid, Lord stablish me.*

Adam created by God, was indued with many excellent graces; but wanted this perseuerance and stability in grace, which now wee haue in Christ: for by him we haue not onely the grace of conversion, but the grace also of confirmation; the one makes vs godly, the other continueth vs godly.

godly. But now, many so leane to the shewe of their conversion, that they are carelesse of the grace of confirmation: wherof it comes to passe, that they end in the flesh, who made a shew of beginning in the Spirit; not considering these two distinct graces requisite to saluation, Conuersion, and Confirmation. Let vs therefore still pray with *David*, that God would stablish and confirme vs.



According to thy promise.] The prayers of the godly, are poured out in faith; they seek nothing but according to Gods promise. Many do otherwise; who pray, neither looking to Gods promise, nor leaning to the Mediator: such prayers, are vvords poured out into the ayre, and carried away with the wind. Yet others are more profane; who pray not onely without a promise, but against the commaund of God: for either when they goe to doe wickedlie, they pray G O D to prosper them; or else, in their perturbations, they cry for vengeance on their neighbours, where they should cry for mercy. These praiers are the offering of strange fire to the Lord; which is abomination.

Yet are wee to remember, that if wee vvould haue our prayers grounded well vpon Gods promises, wee must also remember the condition, whereupon hee hath made the promise. Wee reade, that when *Israel* was oppressed by the Philistims, and cryed vnto God; at the first, he gaue

R 3

them

The prayers of
godly mē, how
they are framed.

Gods promises
are made on a
cōditiō, which
we must regard

Iudg. 10.

Many thinke
they haue life,
who are but
dead.

Amb. in Psal.
119.

In the life ve-
getatiue, trees
excell man.

In the life sen-
sitiue, beasts
excell man.

them a hard answer; *Goe to the Gods whom yee haue serued, and let them deliuer you.* But being humbled by this answer, they pray againe; and with their prayer, put away the false Gods from among them: and then it is subioyned, that the soule of God was grieved for the miseries of Israel. VWhereof wee learne, that it is but a vaine thing to charge G o d with his promise, where wee make no conscience of the condition he requires of vs.

That I may liue.] But what life is this he craues? Had hee not already the life of a King, vvith worldly wealth, and honour enough? Hee had indeede: but this is not the life, which *Dauid* esteemes to bee life. There is nothing naturall men loue better then life; nor feare more then death: yet knowe they not what is the life they should loue, nor what is the death they should flee. *Sunt enim qui viuentes mortui sunt, & qui mortui viuunt:* for there are some liuing men, who are but dead; & some dead, who are liuing.

If this be life, to grow well, and wax strong, frō infancie proceeding to old age; wil not, in this, the trees of the field excell man, who from little plants grow vp into most excellent Cedars? Or, if this be life, to see, to heare, to smell, &c. will not, in this, the beasts of the earth excell thee? for there is no sense, wherein some beasts doe not far excell men: some see better; some heare better; some smell better. And generally, all of them haue

haue a greater appetite to their meat, & are more strong to digest it.

But if yet thou glory in this, that thou art indued with reason; then remember, how many Philosophers and Ethnicks haue excelled thee in the vse of reason. So that neither can thy comfort be in the vegetatiue life, wherein trees excell thee; nor in the sensitiue, which beasts haue better theſe thou; nor in the reasonable life, which many reprobates haue, that shal neuer see the face of God. If man haue no better life then these, hee hath but a shadow of life; and it may truelie be said of him, that while he is liuing, he is dead.

The life of a Christian, stands in this, To haue his soule quickned by the spirit of Grace. For as the presence of the soul quickens the body; & the departure thereof, brings instant death; and the body without it, is but a dead lumpe of clay: so it is the presence of Gods Spirit, which giueth life to the soule, of man.

And this life is known, by these two notable effects; for first, it brings a ioyfull sense of Gods mercy: and next, a spirituall disposition to spirituall exercises. And without this, pretend a man what he will, hee is but the image of a Christian; looking some-what like him, but not quickned by his life.

And disappoint mee not of my hope.] That is, in the time of need, let mee feele the truth of thy promises, to comfort mee: as now I hope

R 4

to

In the life rationall, reprobates excell Christians.



Wherein then stands the life of a Christian, by which hee excels all.

Wisdom provides for the time to come

to find thy helpe in the time of trouble; so I pray thee that I may find it. It is the manner of the godlie, to fore-thinke of that which is to come: and to prouide for trouble, ere trouble come. VVherefore, *Salomon* describing a wise man, saith, that his heart is alway at his right hand, and that his eye is in his forehead. *A prudent man seeth the plague, and hideth himselfe in time*: hee knoweth, that trouble and heauie tentations are before him; and that hee must fight sore battels, before hee enter into his promised *Canaan*; and therefore prayeth seruently before hand, that God would not be farre from him, when trouble comes neere him.

It is, on the contrary, the follie of the vicked, They goe on, saith *Salomon*, and are snared; they neuer fore-thinke what is to come; they rest vp-on present false comforts, which disappooint them in the time of their need. Others, that stand by, may bid them be of good comfort: but what comfort can they haue, when outward comforts, where-to they trusted, faile them; and inward comforts they neuer knew?

VER. II 7. *Stay thou mee, and I shall bee safe: and I will delight continually in thy statutes.*

THis verse contains a prayer, in substance and effect one with the former: and the repetition of the prayer, sheweth that he

was

But the foolish
are so snared
with things
present, that
they see not
what is to come.

Lamentable
that we should
want, when wee
may haue
grace for the
seeking.

was touched with a deepe sense of his owne necessity, which made him seruent in prayer; and it doth greatly reprove vs, who are cold in prayer. We may haue store of grace for seeking; and alas! wee are carelesse to seeke. *If thou knewest, thou wouldest aske; and if thou askedst, I would giue.*

It is true, our Sauour forbids vs to make repetitions in praying, like the heathen, who thinke to be heard for their much babbling. For to offer vnto the Lord multitude of words, without spirit, or affection, is to offer a dead sacrifice to a liuing God: but certaine it is, that words doubled from a seruent and intended affection, are euer gracious, and acceptable to the Lord.

Stay mee.] Like a man ready to fall, hee prayeth God to hold him vp. Three things made *Dauid* afraid: First, great tentations without: for from euery ayre, the wind of tentation blowes vpon a Christian. Secondly, great corruption within. Thirdly, examples of other wortheie men, that haue fallen before him; and are written for vs: not that wee should learne to fall, but to feare least we fall. These three should alway hold vs humble, according to that warning, *Hee that stands, take heed lest he fall.*

Sure it is, we are most strong, when distrusting our owne weakenesse, we leane to the Lord, praying him to stay vs: otherwise, as *Peter*, in his carnall confidence, was ouercome with a small ten-

tation;

Iohn 4.

Words without affection, a dead sacrifice.

Three things caused *Dauid* to feare least hee should fall.

1. Tentation.
2. Corruption.
3. The falls of others.

tation; so presumption, and want of feare in vs, will not faile to procure our fall. Of the promise following, see ver. 16. 35. 47. 70.

VER. 118. *Thou hast trod downe all them that depart from thy statutes: for their deceit is vaine.*

The iudgements
of God, execu-
ted on wicked
men, should be
awe-bands vn-
to vs.

Eccles.

David heere, by a new meditation, confirms himselfe in the course of godlinesse: for considering the iudgements of God, executed according to his word, in all ages vpon the wicked; he resolues so much the more to feare God, and keepe his testimonies. Thus the iudgements of God, executed on others, should be awe-bands to keepe vs from sinning, after their similitude. But few are like *David*, who trembled when hee saw *Vzzah* stricken; and many like *Lamech*, who because hee saw *Cain* the murtherer spared, confirmed himselfe to commit murther also. *Because iudgement is not speedilie executed on the wicked; therefore the hart of the children of men, is set in them to doe evil.* Iudgement in this life, is not executed on all the wicked, because this is the time of his patience; & the day of his iudgement is not yet come: but by the plagues executed vpon some of the wicked, all the rest may learne to feare. For God is no acceptor of persons; what he punisheth in one, hee will punish

nish in all, if repentance preuent nor.

Trode downe.] The Lord, in chastising his owne children, takes them in his hand like a father to correct them: but when his wrath is kindled against the wicked, he tramples them vnder his feete, as vile creatures, which are in no account with him.

That depart.] When the wicked are said to depart from God, it expresseth very properly, both the nature of their sinne, and fearefull punishment thereof. Sin is a departing of man from God his statutes. *Non intervallo locorū Deus relinquitur, sed prauitate morū*: it is not by distance of place, but by peruerse manners, that men depart from God: and in so dooing, their own deede become a punishment to themselves; *For all that goe a whoring from him, shall perisb.* For hee that runs from light, where can he goe but to darknes? and he that departs from the God of life, what is hee but posting to eternall death?

For their deceit is vaine.] *Mendacium hic non refertur ad alios*: hee meanes not heere, of that deceit whereby the wicked deceiue others; but that whereby they deceiue themselves. And this is two-fold: first, in that they looke for a good in sin; which sinne deceitfully promiseth, but they shal neuer find. Next, that they flatter themselves with a vaine cōceit, to eschew iudgement; which shall assuredly over-take them.

VER.

The Lord strikes not the godly, as hee doth the wicked.

Sin is a departing frō God.

Ambr. in Psal.
119.

Deceit of sin is two-fold.

VER. 119. *Thou hast taken away all the wicked of the earth, like drosse: therefore I lone thy testimonies.*

The fall of the wicked is Gods worke, who-euer be the instrument.

The wicked are restlesse in raging now, but God shall bridle them.

The fruit of temporall sin, is eternall paine.

Naturall man cannot mount about the earth.

HE insists still in his former purpose; shewing, how Gods hand, punishing the wicked, made him more godlie. Many waies are wicked men taken away; sometime by the hand of other men, sometime by their owne hand. The Philistims slew not *Saul*, but forced him to sleigh himselfe: yet the eye of faith euer lookes to the finger of God, and sees that the fall of the wicked, is the work of God.

The word which he vseth, imports, Thou hast made them to cease. The wicked stir their time, and are restlesse: they compasse sea & land; they cannot sleepe except they haue done wickedlie: for they are inspired of that Dragon and roaring Lyon; that Compasser, that goeth about continually, seeking all occasions to doe euill. The facultie of mouing & breathing, which God hath lent them, they vse against himselfe: but let them remember, he will shortly take his breath out of their nosethrills, and then shall they cease; and the fruit of their temporall sinnes, shall be eternall paines: for their worme dies not, and the smoake of their torment shall ascend for euer.

The wicked of the earth.] It is customable to the Spirit of God, to describe the wicked, by calling them

them *Men of the earth*: for their original is earth; themselves are earthly minded; and they end in earth. They haue sometime in their pride, high imaginations; as if wth the builders of *Babel*, they would mount vp into heauen: but the higher they mount, the lower they fall; they end in dust, & then their thoughts perish. By his birth, he comes into vanitie, saith *Salomon*: and by his death, he goeth into darknes.

Like drosse.] The men of this world, esteeme Gods children, as the off-scourings of the earth; so *Paul* (a chosen vessell of God) was disesteemed of men: but yee see heere, what the wicked are in Gods account; but drosse indeede, which is the refuse of gold, or siluer. Let this confirme the godly, against the contempt of men; Onlie the Lord hath in his owne hand, the balance, which weigheth men according as they are.

Thy testimonies.] So, very frequently hee calleth Gods word; wherein there are both commands and promises: the commandements of God, appertaine to all; his testimonies belong to his children onely: whereby, more stricly, I vnderstand his promises, contayning speciall declarations of his loue and fauour, toward his own in Christ Iesus.

Comfort whē
the godly are
disesteemed of
the wicked,

The testimo-
nies of God,
what they are,
and for whom.

VER. 120. *My flesh trembleth for feare of thee:
and I am afraide of thy iudgements.*

Euery thing
that a godly
man sees, sends
him back to
consider him-
selfe.

Greg. moral.

Our loue not
without feare.

HOW *Dauid*, by consideration of Gods iudgements on others, profited in the loue of GOD, hee shewed in the last verse: now hee declareth, how he also profited in the feare of GOD; by looking to the iudgements of God, which he had executed vpon others.

It is a grace of the godly, that when they looke to many things without them, they are alwaies drawne home, to edifie themselves by that which they see in others, whether it be good or euill. *Electorum corda semper ad se sollicitè redeunt:* Other men so looke vnto other things, that they forget themselves; onely feeding their senses, & there-with contracting guiltinesse: which for the present they knowe not. Happy is hee, who of all that he sees, learnes to be more wise and godly himselfe.

But how doe these two consist together? Hee said before, he loued the testimonies of God: and now he saith, hee feared the iudgements of God. It is answered, they agree very well in the godly, militant in this body. If our loue were perfect, as theirs is, who are glorified, it would cast out all feare, as saith the Apostle: but in this bodie of sinne, we cannot so loue him for his mercies, but
by

by reason of the great corruption of our nature, we must also feare him for his iudgements. Yea, which is more, the loue of God cannot be kept in our harts, but by the feare of God : and if the feare of God conserue vs not, our harts should easily be caried away to the loue of other things, not worthy to bee loued, and no place for the loue of God should be left in our harts. *Confige ergo clauis spiritualibus, & destrue fomenta peccati; affige carnes patibulo crucis dominica, ut libertatem vagandi cupiditas voluptatum cruci affixa non habeat*: nayle therefore thy carnall desires to the Crosse of Christ, that they may haue no libertie, as they were wont, to goe loose, and wander where they please. Otherwise, if thou wilt be vaine, caried like an instable man, after the wandering lusts of corrupt nature, fearful is that sentence, *My Spirit shal not alway strue with man, for he is but flesh.*

For feare of thee.] Familiaritie with men, breeds contempt; familiaritie with God, not so: none reuerence the Lord more, then they vwho knowe him best, and are most familiar with him. The Seraphins, who couer their faces in presence of his Maiestie, teach vs this by their example. Such as doe not remember God (and far lesse reuerence him) when they thinke or speak of his Maiestie, declare sufficiently, that they were neuer familiar with him.

I am afraid of thy iudgements.] It is not to bee thought

Loue of God,
conserued in
our hart by
feare.

Ambr. in Psal.
119.

Gene. 6.

Familiaritie
with God,
breeds no con-
tempt of him,
but greater re-
uerence.

Sith the godly
are not freed
from feare,

what horrible
feare abides
the wicked?

thought strange, that this feare of Gods iudgements is in men regenerate: for the guiltinesse which by sinnes of commission and omission, daily they contract, cannot be without fear. But, as I said, it cannot continue: for in them, feare prepares away to loue; and loue, as it increaseth, diminisheth feare.

Alway we learne here, that if the iudgements of God executed vpon others, make the godlie afraid, how fearefull, and importable they will be to the wicked. If *Moses* trembled at the giuing of the law, how terrible shall the execution thereof be vnto the wicked? Let vs fear in time, and we shall not feare in that day, wherein horrible feare shall confound the wicked.

AIN.



A I N.

VER. 121. *I haue executed iudgement and iustice :
leane me not to mine oppressors.*

IN this Section *Dauid* continueth his prayer, for protection against his enemies; as also for grace to knowe his way vpon earth, and follow it. He begins with a Petition; *Leane me not to mine oppressors*: and he giues the reason; *I haue executed iudgement and iustice*. Where we are not to thinke that he is iustifying himselfe before God; but onely declaring how iniustly he was oppressed by men: *Defensio est, non arrogantia*. Our lesson is; If we would haue our prayers forcible, let vs intertaine the testimony of a good conscience.

Iudgement and iustice.] These two are distinguished by *Ambrose*, in such sort, that he makes the one the effect of the other: *Iudicij finis iustitia est: in altero veritatis custodia est, in altero fructus aequitatis*; iudgement is the keeper of verity, iustice the fruit of equity: the one of these pertaining to the minde, makes it giue light for dis-

A good conscience makes boldnes in prayer.

Ambin Pf. 119

Iudgement and iustice, how distinguished.

David in Psalm.
119.

We cannot in
this life be free
of trouble by
wicked men.

How should
we pray against
our soules op-
pressors?

cerning betweene right and wrong; the other rectifying the affections and actions. Happy is the man in whom these two concur together: *Quis autem hodie tanta animi praeclatus est puritate, ut cum fiducia verbis istis uti possit?* But who this day is indued with such purity of minde, that with boldnesse he may vse these words; *My reioycing is the testimony of a good conscience?*

Leaue me not.] We haue often said that David was a man after Gods owne heart, who had also the testimony of a good conscience to sustaine him; yet could he not liue free from the oppression of wicked men. So long as this battell lasts, and Satan wants not instruments, let vs euer look to be troubled by them; and not to be discouraged thereat, but rather comforted, considering the inimity proclaimed in Paradise is without reconciliation: and sith the Prince of our saluation sustained such contradiction of sinners; why shall it grieue vs to beare his crosse?

And sith David so earnestly prayed, not to be left into the hands of his bodily oppressors; what shall we doe against our soules oppressors? Satan seekes continually to spoile vs of that sparke of spiri-^{tuall} life which God hath put into vs. It is a fearfull iudgement, where God leaues men to his tyrannie: let vs pray for mercy against it.

Ver.

VER. 122. *Answer for thy servant, in that thing which is good: and let not the proud oppresse me.*

AMong many crosses wherewith *Dauid* was exercised, the strife of tongues is not one of the least: they did persecute him with lies and calumnies: scoffers and belly-gods made a by-word of him in their meetings; and flattering Courtiers belied him vnto *Saul*. This was not a small crosse; *Molesta enim res calumnia etiamsi magnum afferat primum*: against it *Dauid* makes his refuge to God; *Answer for thy servant*. His meaning is, Lord thou knowest how iniustly I am calumniated and euill spoken of in many parts: where I am not, nor may not answer for my selfe, Lorde answer thou for me.

And his petition imports not onely a craving of helpe from God; but that God would take his part, and ioyn him selfe with his righteous cause. And so it is indeede: the Lord is partaker with his children in their innocent sufferings, and their cause is his cause; *Blessed are ye when ye are rased upon for righteousness sake, &c. For the spirit of grace and glorie rests in you, which on their part is euill spoken of, but on your part is glorified*. This might serue for a warning to wicked men: if any wisdom were in them, they should be loath to meddle with the children of God: for if so

Calumnies of
men heauy
crosses.
Plal. 35. 16.

B. 4. 1.

God is a partaker with his
owne in their
innocent sufferings.
1. Pet. 4.

Dangerous to
commend a
wrong cause to
Gods protection.

Gen. 19.

Oryet were
our cause ne-
uer so good, we
must not think
to beare it out
by our wise-
dome.

Psal. 37. 34.
1. Pet. 5. 7.

Mans greatest
honor is to be
Gods seruant.

they will, they meddle with a stronger partie then they are aware of.

Againe, it is to be considered, that hee craues protection onely in his good and honest cause. It is not for vs to call for the Lords assistance to all our willes and workes : *Hee is the righteous Iudge of the world, and neyther will nor can do vnrightheously.* To commend a wrong cause to his protection, is to prouoke him to hasten our punishment.

And on the other hand, albeit our cause were neuer so righteous, yet we must not think to bear it out with our owne strength and wisdom. It fallies out oft-times, that men fall downe and faint through feebleness, even in a good cause; because they giue not to God his glory. In their lawfull affairs they prosper not, because they take counsel, but not from me (saith the Lord). They commit not their way to God, as *Dauid* exhorts; neyther cast they their burden vpon the Lord, as *Peter* commaunds them: but sacrifice to their own net, & think to cōpasse their affaires by their own wir. Sure it is, the Lord is then most carefull of vs, when we cast our greatest care vpon him.

For thy seruant. Customably King *Dauid* delights in this stile, to call himselfe Gods seruant; learning vs also to count this our greatest honor, to be the seruants of the great and euer-living God: for we are not our owne (as saith the Apostle); *We are bought with a price.* But here is our sin; such

such as are vnder vs, whether they be bought, or hired seruants, wee thinke they should serue vs, and are offended if they doe not; but are not so carefull to doe seruice to him, who is aboue vs: who hath not onely bought vs with a deer price, and promised to vs excellent things heereafter; but daily rewards vs with wages, that farre surmounts our seruice.

And this dutie, should the more willinglie be discharged by vs, because the seruice is honourable where-vnto the Lord imployes vs: for it is not to doe any base or seruile thing, as to worke in brick and clay; which way the Israelites serued *Pharao*, and common seruants serue their Lord and Master. No: *Pretiosa hac seruitus virtutum constat expensis*: this pretious and honourable seruice, stands in the practice of vertue, in prayer, and prayes of the Lord thy God. These are the principall poynts of this seruice; in this wee haue the Angels to bee our companions: for in these same things they serue GOD with vs, and serue vs for Gods sake. And shame will be vnto vs, if wee bee ashamed to serue GOD vvith them; and one of vs to serue another for Gods sake.

The seruice is not base but honourable wherein God imployes vs.

Ambrose.

VER. 123. *Mine eyes haue failed in waiting for thy saluation, and for thy iust promise.*

Dauids seruent
desire of Gods
saluation.
B. 151.

DAuid here renues the protestation of his earnest desire he had of Gods saluation: *Et ut desiderij vehemētiam significet*, and to expresse the vehemencie of his desire, he protests that his eyes failed in waiting: meaning *Oculos mentis*, as *Euthymius* thinkes, of the eyes of his mind. So also *Ambrose* expounds it; *Oculi anima tota fidei intentione in Deum defixi erant*, that the eyes of his soule, and whole intention of his faith, were fixed vpon God.

Saluation is of
two sortes;
Dauid seekes
the best.

But what is this saluation for which he waited so earnestly? Not that temporall deliuerance from his enemies; for which also many times he prayeth to the Lord his God: but especially here he prayeth for that saluation, mentioned *Ps. 106. Visit me with the saluation of thy people, that I may reioyce with the ioy of thine inheritance*: and for which also he prayeth; *Many say, Who will shew vs any good; but Lord lift thou vp the light of thy countenance vpon me.* And this is it, where vpon the desires of our soule should alway be intended.

Psal. 4.

The restless
vanity of
worldlings.

If a man shall separate himselfe in his cogitation, and take a view of mens actions in the world, he shall see them running with insatiable desires; som after one thing, & som after another: they
arc

are all in a restlesse businesse, like rauening birds and beasts of the earth pursuing their prey. But is not their labour a wandring after vanitie? Will the fruite of their actions remaine with them? Are they not fooles, to be busie about many things with *Martha*; carelesse about one thing, which is needfull, with *Mary*? Let vs be wise in time. Happy is he whose heart is well set, to couet the best things: if, with *Dauid*, we can waite, and hunger and thirst for Gods saluation, God will not faile in his owne time to satisfie vs.

And for thy trust promise.] He sheweth here vpon what warrant he did wait for Gods saluation; namely, his promise. There is no people, who know there is a God, but they wait for some good things from him: neuerthelesse, all these walke in vncertainties; only we haue Gods warrant for our hope: which is his sure promise hee hath made and sealed to vs in Christ Iesus.

But in this point also the vnthankfulnesse of this age is manifest: for who now delight in the promises of God? No, no; as if they were but vaine wordes, men now account more of one of his temporall gifts presently given them, then they doe of the most excellent promises of better things to come, which he hath made to them: and therefore is it they waite not for those which are to come, but let loose their hearts, to delight in these which are present.

Gods promise
is the warrant
of our hope.

Small present
gifts more e-
steemed by
worldlings
then promises
of greater
things to com.

An vnthankful, vnfruitfull, & back-slyding generation is this, wherein we are fallen. God be mercifull vnto it.

VER. 124. *Deale with thy seruauant according to thy mercy; and teach me thy statutes.*

We cannot
serue God as
we should.

HE protests now, as oft before, that hee was Gods seruauant; that he did not liue according to his owne will, but depended on the will of God. Euen as the eyes of a seruauant looke to the Master, and the eyes of a hand-maid to her Mistresse: so did hee looke vnto the Lord his God. But because he was priuie to the conscience of his owne sinnes, and that his seruice was not such as it should haue been, therefore he appeales to mercy; praying God not to deale with him after his seruice, but after Gods mercie. *Non uno facto seruus Dei absoluitur*: It is not one dutie which completes the seruice wee owe vnto God. Yea, when we haue done all that we can, we are but vnprofitable seruants: for who can serue so great a Master as the Lord is, according as he should be serued?

Yea, our best
seruice is farre
inferior to his
wages.
Amb. in Psalm.
119.

Yea, to let be himselfe; who can serue him, worthy of that wage we haue receiued from him? *Quis tanta natura munera, vita salutisque seruata diuina beneficia, digno possit aquare seruicio? Quis potest soluere quod accepit? ideoque misericordiam*

cordiam petit David: VWho can giue equall seruice for so great benefits of nature, life, and satisfaction, which we haue receiued from God? who can recompence him that which hee hath giuen? or pay him that which he oweth vnto him? And therefore *David* knowing all these, he cryeth for mercy.

And yet shall we not be defrauded of the comfortable stile of Gods seruants, if wee find these two things: First, that wee are glad to doe any thing in his seruice, that wee knowe is according to his will. Next, that wee are sorrowfull for the euill which wee doe; and for the good which of weakenesse we leaue vndone.

Teach mee.] *David* had *Nathan* and *Gad* the Prophets; and beside them, the ordinary Leuites to teach him. He read the word of God diligently, and did meditate in the law night & day; but hee acknowledgeth all this was nothing, vnlesse God did teach him. Other teachers speake to the eare; but God speakes to the hart: so *Paul* preached to *Lydia*, but God opened her hart. Let vs pray for this grace.

Two things proue a man to be Gods seruant.

Outward and ordinary teachers, are nothing if God teach not.

VER. 125. *I am thy seruant: grant me therefore vnderstanding, that I may know thy testimonies.*

IN this verse, his former petition is renewed, with a reason. The thing he seeks, is vnderstanding:

They may
lawfully seeke
all good from
God, who can
truely say they
are his owne.

Amb. in Ps. 119

Basil. in Ps. 119.

The godly can
not learne so
much, but they
would still
vnderstand
more.

Ambrose.

ding. *Intellectus spiritale munus est: & ideo quod Dei est, à Domino postulatur*; vnderstanding is a spirituall gift. *David* seekes it from God, because it is at his Donation. The reason he vseth; *I am thy seruant: Non quasi extraneus poscit.* I am not a stranger to thee, but thine own domestique seruant; let me want no grace may enable mee to serue thee. *Omnes homines natura sunt serui Dei; adoptione verò illi qui dominationem Dei cupide sunt amplexi*: All men by nature are Gods seruants; by adoption onely, they who are glad to come vnder his Dominion: these serue him, not by constraint, nor for feare onely, but willingly and with ioy; as being such seruants as are also his sonnes.

He acknowledgeth here his owne wants; that as a naturall man he had no vnderstanding of the wayes of God: his Word is full of mysteries; which we cannot know, till God reueale them. And as a Regenerate man, hee had not so much knowledge as he should haue. *Habebat intellectum: sed ut redundaret, obuiorem inquiri*; he had vnderstanding, but he craues he might more & more abound in all knowledge & iudgement. We will not with *Euah* aspire to that knowledge which God hath forbidden: but that which God hath reuealed vnto vs, wee will neuer thinke wee can learne it so well, but that still we haue need to learne it better.

To knowe thy Testimonies.] Hee prayed before

fore for knowledge of Gods Statutes : now he prayeth for the knowledge of Gods Testimonies. The Statutes (more strictly taken) are that parte of Gods Word declaring his Will, which wee should obey : the Testimonies properly are that part of Gods Word, declaring his Promises, which we should beleue. To know the first without the second, will not make vs godly : for it is the sense of Gods loue, and faith in his Testimonies, that workes kindly obedience; and therefore *David* prayeth for it. See vers. 2. 14. 22. 24. 36. 46. 59. 79. 88. 95. 99. 111. &c.

Statutes and Testimonies of God would be learned together.

VER. 126. *It is time for thee to worke : for they haue destroyed thy Lawe.*

HEe hath complained before of the oppression of his aduersaries ; & besought the Lord to arme him against them, with knowledge & vnderstanding: now he complains their iniquity was come to such a height, that they did giue battell euen to God himselfe; and were not only enemies to *David*, but such as had done what they could to destroy the law of God. So the verse conraines a prayer, that God would work; and a reason, taken from the ripenesse of the wickednesse of his enemies.

David is complaint against his enemies.

According to our sense, there is a time wherin
God

God is a continuall working vertue, euen when we think he is resting.

How David prescribes a time to the Lord,

Some promises made with a time when they shall be performed.

God worketh not: whereof proceedes in the godlie the like of these complaints; *Arise Lord, why sleepest thou? How long wilt thou forget?* It is true, in himselfe hee is a continuall working vertue; but wee, beeing ignorant of the waies whereby he walkes to his owne end, think sometime that hee is not working, because hee is not exccuring: although euen then, when wee so thinke, hee be most busily working a way, to effect his owne determinate conclusion.

But how is this, that hee prescribeth a time to the Lord? Is not this to fall into that fault, which is reprooued, Psalm 78? *They limited the Holie one of Israel.*

For answer of this; God hath made some promises with a time, declaring to his children when hee would performe them. So hee promised to free *Abrahams* seed, from the Egyptian persecution, after foure hundred yeeres; as hee did: for it was no lesse between the beginning of that persecution in *Ismael* mocking *Isaac*, & the deliuerance from it, in *Pharao* oppressing *Israel* with burdens.

Again, he promised to bring *Israel* out of *Babel* after seauenty yeeres; and therefore the godly, who thought very long for expiring of that date, praised earnestly, that God would haue mercy on *Sion*, because the appointed time was come. So also, he promised to send *Shiloh*, the true deliuerer of his people, at that time when the Scepter shold depart

depart from *Israel*: and therefore at that time, *Simcon* waited for the consolation, and his eyes saw the saluation, of God.

Other promises againe hee makes without a time; that is, not telling when he will performe them. He put *Noah* in the Ark; but told him not when hee would bring him out: and hee taried a yeere and a day, waiting Gods time with patience. He sent *Ioseph* and *Mary* into Egypt, commanding them to tarie there, till he told them: they inquired not how long; neither did hee tell them: Learning vs, when God layes a crosse on vs, not to capitulate with him, concerning the time of our deliuerance; but patiently to beare it, till his time come. It was *Sauls* over-hastinels; he taried for *Samuel* seauen daies, but would tarie no longer. And it was the blasphemous speech of *Iehoram*, Why should I attend any longer?

Let vs not dishonour the Lord, by prescribing a time to him. If he should alway tell vs the time of our deliuerance, the praise of our patience should be the lesse, and our prayer the colder: but when hee conceales the time, and wee with patience wait vpon it; we giue good prooffe of our faith and patience, and finde our deliuerance the sweeter when it comes.

Yet in publick troubles of the Church, when the pride of the enemie is become great, and the cup of the Amorites seemes to be full; when the children of God, are brought low, & their soules humbled

Some without
a time.

In these wee
should haue pa-
tience waiting
till Gods time
come.



When the god-
ly may vie this
reason in their
prayer, The
time is come.

Offences done
against God,
should grieve
vs more then
our owne iniu-
ries.

godly mē haue
no enemies,
but such as are
enemies to
God.

Seeing Gods
law can not be
destroyed, how

humbled to the dust; it is no limitation of the Lord, when with *Dauid* they pray, that G O D would haue mercy on them, because the time is come.

For they haue destroyed thy law.] It is a great prooffe of true godlinesse, when we are more displeased with offences done against the Lord our G O D, then with such as are done against our selues. But it is now far otherwise with most part of Professors: so that they bee not preiudiced in their names, and commodities, they care not what be done against the glory of God. An euident argument, that they neuer loued him.

In the second verse of this Section, hee complained, that the proud would oppresse him: now he complaineth, that they destroyed the law of God. Who then are *Dauids* enemies, and seek to oppresse him? Onely such as are enemies to God, and seeke to destroy his law. A great comfort haue we in this, that if we loue the Lord, and studie in a good conscience to serue him, wee can haue no enemies, except such as are enemies to God. And so long as God wants his due at their hands, that is, loue and seruice; may not wee be content to want their affection toward vs? Truly, it should greatly increase our patience, to remember, that if they were not enemies to God, they would neuer be our enemies.

But, how is this he saith, They haue destroyed thy law? Is this possible, that Gods law can be destroyed?

destroyed? No indeed: yet because their malice would, if their power might, they shall be charged with it.

There is a law of God written in holy Scripture, which the wicked in all ages haue sought to destroy; but God hath marvellously preserved it. There is a law written in the booke of euery mans conscience, which the most profane in the world, doe what he can, is not able to scrape out; but still it iudgeth him, conuinceth him, and rebukes him when he doth wrong. And, as for the execution of the law, all the wicked in the world are not able to stay it, when Gods time cometh: yet because (as I said) the wicked would do it if they might, they are charged with it, that they haue done it. For as the godly shall haue imputed to the, that good, which faine they would haue done, albeit they did not performe it: so shall the wicked be charged as verely with that euill, which they would haue done, albeit they neuer did it. O what a heape of finnes shall be gathered against them, whē with the finnes of their actions and words, the finnes of their affections shall be conioyned also!

And here we see, how-euer God for a time tolerate them, yet he hath his owne appointed time to punish them, and will not passe it. *Omnia in statu gubernat Deus*; God ruleth all things in a balance. *Diu quidem fert mortalium peccata: ubi vero patientia eius inuita auget malisiam videt,*

turn

are the wicked charged with this crime?

The law written in the Bible they cannot destroy.

The law written in the conscience, they can neuer destroy.

Yea because their malice would doe it if they might, they shall be charged with it.



there is a time appointed for the punishment of euil men.

Basil.

Ambrose.

tum penas sumit: Long doth the Lord suffer the sinnes of mortall men; but when they abuse his patience to increase their wickednes, then hee doth punish them, he doth nothing out of time. *Totum opportunum est quod fecerit*; but whatsoeuer hee doth, hee doth it most seasonably: and therefore whether it bee deliuerance to vs, or iudgement vpon our enemies, that God delaies; let vs knowe it is because his houre is not yet come.

VER. 127. *Therefore loue I thy Commandements; aboue gold: yea, aboue most fine gold.*

True religion
cannot be try-
ed without
trouble.

WE may see here that *Dauid* was not a temporizer in religion; whose affection towards Gods word depends vpon the state of times, and persons of men: but euen when his enemies did disdain it, yea because they sought to destroy it, therefore he loued it. This is a tryall of true religion, euen then to cleaue to the word of God and professe it constantly, when honourable, and great men of the world are against it. This was *Iosua* his resolution, *Albeit all the world should forsake God, yet I and my fathers house will worship him.* And *Peters* in like manner, when many of Christs disciples did forsake him, and it was asked at them, *Will yee go also from me?* he answered, *where a-*

way

way shall we goe? thou hast the words of eternall life. To professe religion, when it is warranted by law; when both rulers and people professe it, is no great matter: but when the powers of the world forsake it; then to stand to it, is an argument of true religion.

Loue I thy commandements.] Hee professeth not that hee fulfilled them; but that hee loued them: and truely it is a great progresse in godlines, if we be come thus far, as from our heart to loue them. The natural man hates the commandements of God; they are so contrary to his corruption: but the regenerate man, as he hates his owne corruption, so he loues the word; because according to it he desires to bee reformed. And here is our comfort, That albeit we cannot doe what is commanded; yet if we loue to doe it, it is an argument of grace receiued.

Above gold.] It is not vnlawful to loue those creatures, which God hath appointed for our vse; with these two conditions: the one is, that the first seat in our affection of loue, be reserved to God; and any other thing wee loue, that we loue it, in him and for him, and giue it onely the second roome. Thus *Dauid*, being a naturall man, loued his naturall foode: but he protesteth hee loued the law of the Lord, more then his appointed foode; and here he loues the commandements of God, aboue all gold.

T

V E R.

Loue of Gods
obedience, an
argument of
true godlinesse.

With what
cōditions Gods
creatures may
be loued.

VER. 128. *Therefore I esteeme all thy precepts
most iust; and I hate all false wayes.*

As the minde
esteemes of any
thing, the affec-
tions go after it

IN this verse are two protestatiōs. In the first, he declares how he esteemed of Gods word in his minde: in the second, how in his affection he was disposed toward it. As the minde of a man esteemes of any thing, so are his affections moued to flie or follow it. It is shame for many professors, now to say they esteeme of Gods word, when they shew their affections more set vpon any thing in the world, then vpon it.

The word of
God called iust
in two respects.

Most iust.] In two respects is the word of God iust: first, because it commands nothing, but that which is most reasonable; and next, because it shal not faile one iot, but the euent of things shal bee according to the predictions of this word. What cause haue we then to reioice, That how euer our tribulations be many, yet wee heare, out of this most iust word, It cannot bee but well with them that feare the Lord? And again, what cause of feare is there to the wicked? when this same word saith, *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God. And a sinner of an hundred yeeres old shall dy accursed.* If wee behold the wicked in their most flourishing estate, and looke to them in the glasse of the word, we shall see their miseraend, long before it come.

Hatred of euill
is a val of our
loue to God.

And I hate all false wayes.] The best tryall of

our

our loue to God and his word, is the contrary; hatred of sin and impietie: *Yee that loue the Lord hate that which is euill.* He that loues a tree, hates the worme that consumes it: he that loues a garment, hates the moth that eates it: he that loueth life, abhorreth death: and he that loues the Lord, hates euery thing that offends him. Let men take heede to this, who are in loue of their sinnes: how can the loue of God be in them?

All false wayes. Religion binds vs not onely to hate one way of falschood, but all the wayes of it. As there is nothing good, but in some measure a godly man loues it: so is there nothing euill, but in som measure he hates it. And this is the perfection of the children of God: a perfection, not of degrees; for we neither loue good, nor hate euill as wee should: but a perfection of parts; because euery good we loue, and wee hate euery euill in some measure.

The worst man in the world loues some good, and hates some euill. *Plerumque enim peccata huiusmodi sunt, ut si alterum declines, incurras alterum;* oftentimes he that declines one sin, falls into another: It may be thou hatest couetousness, & yet art snared with lechery; there is one very temperate of his mouth, but of a proud & haughty heart; there is another not ambitious of honour, but a seruant to gluttony: *Diuerso usu in eundem indevotionis errorem uterque concurrit.* And this is very dangerous, when as men because some good

The perfection of the godly is in parts, not in degrees.

Ambrose.
It is sufficient to mans damnation, if he be captiued by any one sinne.

thing is in them, take the greater liberty to cōmit
some euill: for, if Sathan get a gripe of thee by a-
ny one sin, is it not enough to carry thee to dam-
nation? As the butcher carries the beast to the
slaughter, sometime bound by all the foure feete,
and sometime by one onely: so is it with Satan.
Though thou be not a slaue to all sin; if thou be
a slaue to one, the gripe he hath of thee, by that
one sinfull affection, is sufficient to captiue thee.

PE



P E.

VER. 129. *Thy testimonies are wonderfull: therefore doth my soule keepe them.*



HE familiarity of man with God, is increased and continued by the exercises of the word and prayer. For in the word, God speakes vnto men; and in prayer men speake vnto God: let not men disioyne these two. For hee that cannot receiue the Lord with reuerence and obedience when hee speakes (answering him with *Abraham* and *Samuell*, Here am I Lord; Speake for thy seruant heareth) shall not be welcommed of him, nor receiue a fauourable answer when he praies. Yea, as *Salomon* saith, *He that turns away his eare from hearing the law, his prayer shall be abominable.*

Such as haue receiued most from God, are more instant by prayer to craue more. No maruell, that the wicked, who neuer got grace from him, cannot pray vnto him: for who will seeke a treasure where he thinkes not to finde it? or who will seeke refreshing waters, where he lookes not to finde them. They knowe him not to be the

T 3

father

If we heare not
God when hee
speakes in his
word, we sh. be
not be welcom
when we pray.

If men seek not
from God, it is
because they
know him not.

Our manifold
necessities re-
quire mani-
tolde prayers.

To continue
long in praier,
and be feruent
also is a diffi-
cult thing.

August.
ad Probam.

father of light, the fountaine of life, the treasure of all good, they belicue not his word; and how then can they call vpon him? but the godly, who knowe what the Lord is worth, are continual-
lie seeking from him, as heere yee may see in *Dauid*.

In *Davids* praier, mark his variety and breuity: his varietie in this, that as his necessities were manifold, so his requests; he praies for his mind, for his heart and affections, for his tongue, for his eyes, for his feet. As *Iob* when he praied, sacrificed for all his children: so the Christian when he goes to pray, prayeth for euery thing that is in him. And if we knew how many are our necessities, for the which we haue need to pray; beside that wee are bound to pray for others, wee would not be so slacke, and remisse in prayer, as we are.

His breuitie againe is euident; he hath many, but very short petitions: this proceeds not of weariness, but as I haue said of feruency. Finding his necessities so many, he passeth speedily from one to another; for it is a difficult thing to continue our prayers long, and keepe zeale and sincerity: sometime so it will fall out, but very seldom. Yea, the children of God may obserue in their owne experience, that it is a difficult thing to pray the Lords prayer, and not to be interrupted in it. *Augustine* records of Christians in Egypt, *Habent preces crebras et breues, tanquam*
ei. cu-

eiaculationes animorum ; idque inquit, ne intentio illa emollefeat. They haue short & frequent praierers, like eiaculations, or bolts and arrowes shot out of their soules: which they doe saith hee, for this cause, that their intention should not relent in praier through long continuance. And therefore he teacheth vs to frame our praierers according to our disposition. When our affections are not intended, it is not good to make them more dull by continuance: when againe they are spiritually disposed, then it is good to continue our conference with God; though this same consideration be vsed by some Christians in our time to vrge continuance in prayer. For if they get no accessse, they are more instant, and loath to come away without a fauourable aunswere: if againe they finde comfort in praier, and that God hears them, they are also loath to break off their conference with him.

And to this purpose notable is it, which there he subioynes. *Oratio multa esse debet, loquutio paucis.* Our prayers should bee many, but our words few; and that *lachrymis potius quam verbis agendum sit, et fletu magis quam affatu: Verba enim non in alium vsum adhiberi, quam vt vel nos ipsos vel alios incitemus.* We should deale with God by teares more then by talke, by weeping more then by words: for words are vsed in prayer for none other end, but either to stirre vp our selues, or others to pray.

Praierers would be short & frequent.



Praierers should be made long or short according to our disposition.

Good to deale with God by teares more then by talke.

Two things in
this verse.

Commendatio
of Gods word.

Every article of
our faith is a
mystery.

1. Tim. 3



This verse containes in it two things: first, a commendation of Gods word; that the testimonies thereof are wonderfull: and next a protestation of his earnest affection towards it; and therefore saith he, My soule doth keep it.

Many waies hitherto hath he praised the word of God: as namely, that there is no good thing wherupon the heart of man can be set by nature, but the worde of God offers him better then it; for it renders incomparable pleasure and profit: beside, true wisdom to such as delight in it, is sweeter then the hony; it is more to be desired then gold or siluer.

But here he praiseth it frō a new quality: *Al thy testimonies are wonderfull*; and so they are: for euerie article of our faith is a mysterie. *Great is the mystery of godlinesse*, said the Apostle. Though to naturall men the Gospell seeme a base and a foolish doctrine, yet is it indeede wonderfull. Whereof we learne, that if we would bee good scholars in the Lords schoole, to profit by his word, we must not come to it with naturall sence and reason, as customably men doe; to iudge it, rather then to be iudged and controlled by it: but as it is a wonderfull and supernaturall doctrine; so must wee not examine it by nature, but imbrace it by faith. Other wise, it shall be but a stumbling blocke, and rocke of offence vnto vs.

Of his protestation renewed, see what we haue marked

marked, Verle 47. 48. 97. 113. 119. 127. 132.
140. 159. 163. 165. 167.

VER. 130. *The entrance into thy word sheweth
light, and giueth vnderstanding to the simple.*

AS the life of naturall babes, is not conserued without foode conuenient for them: so is not the life of men regenerate, preserued without the word. And as the one by natures instinct, desires to bee nourished with milke: so the other by instinct of grace, desires to be fed by the word. Neither is it to the godly as meate only, but as light also. The sure word of the prophets, Saint *Peter* calles it a light shining in darkenes, like as before hee called it vnmingled milke, and most necessary foode for the babes of Christ. And the spirit of God so frequently comparing Gods word to foode and to light, will tell vs, in what miserable estate they are, who liue without it.

Heere he praiseth the word from this notable quality, that it is an illuminating word, such as giues vnderstanding; letting vs thereby to know, that without it men walk in darknes. What-euer thew of learning Naturalists had. yet being ignorant of Christ, by whom the father is knowne and the way of saluation manifested, they did but vanish in their owne cogitations; and while they pro-

The word
serues for food
and light to
the soule.

Without the
word men walk
in darknes.

Shame it is now
to see aged men
children in vnder-
standing.
Yatab.

Onely simple
men, and not
they who are
high minded,
profit by the
word.

No maruaile
Papists profit
not by it.

Papists calum-
nie of the ob-
scurity of scrip-
ture confuted.

professed themselves to bee wise, they became fooles.

He amplifies this praise of the word of God, when he saith that the entrance thereof, *ostium verborum tuorum*, the first opening of the doore of thy word giues light; for if the first entrance to it giue light, what will the progresse and continuance thereof do? This accuseth the age wherein we liue; who now of a long time hath been taught by the word of God so cleerely, that in regard of time they might haue been teachers of others, yet are they but children in knowledge and vnderstanding. But to whom doth the word giue vnderstanding? *Dauid* saith to the simple: not to such as are high minded, or double in heart, or wise in their owne eyes, who will examine the mysteries of godlines by the quicknes of naturall reason. No: to such as deny themselves, as captiue their naturall vnderstanding, and like humble disciples submit themselves, not to aske, but to heare; not to reason, but to belieue. And if for this cause, Naturalists who want this humility, cannot profit by the word; what maruaile that Papists far lesse become wise by it, who haue their hearts so full of preiudices concerning it, that they spare not to vtter blasphemies against it; calling it, not onely vnprofitable, but pernitiuous to the simple and to the idiots.

And againe, where they charge it with diffcultie, that simple men and idiots should not bee suffered

suffered to read it, because it is obscure; all these friuolous allegations of men, are annulled by this one testimony of God, that it giues light to the simple. *Eos qui ignorantia tenentur, & infantibus similes sunt, intellectu replet lex tua*; that is, Euen to such ignorants, who are like infants, saith, *Basill, non solum viris, sed mente & intellectu paruulis*, it giues not onely light to men but to such as in vnderstanding are children. To this purpose notable is that saying of *Irenaeus, Vniuersa scripturae et prophetica & euangelica, in aperto, et sine ambiguitate, et ab omnibus audiri possunt*, The whole scriptures both prophetical, and euangelicall, are open, plaine, not doubtfull, but such as may be heard of all men. And to this purpose, saith *Lactantius, Num igitur deus, & mentis, & lingua, & vocis artifex disertè loqui non potest? Imò verò summa prouidentia carere facio voluit ea qua diuina sunt, vt omnes intelligerent qua ipse omnibus loquebatur*. Shall wee thinke that God, who is the creator of the minde, the tongue, and voice, cannot speake distinctly himselfe? No truly: by great prouidence he hath propounded his word in so plaine a manner, that all sorts of men may vnderstand that which he speaks vnto all. Many other witnesses might be brought to this same purpose: but I cease.

V E R.

Basill.

Euthym.

Iren. l. 2. c. 46

Lactant. l. 6. c. 21

How a moued
mind affects
the body.

The feruent
desire of godly
men toward the
word.

VER. 123. *I opened my mouth, and panted, because I loved thy Commandments.*

BY this manner of speech, *David* expresses, as *Basile* thinks, *Animi propensionem*; that the inclination of his soule was after Gods word. For, this opened mouth, *Ambrose* thinks, is *Os interioris hominis*, the mouth of the inward man, which in effect is his heart: and the speech notes *Vehementem animi intensionem*, a vehement intension of his spi: it, saith *Euthymius*: yet shall it not be amisse to consider heere how the minde of the godly earnestly affected, moues the body also. The speech may be drawne from trauellers, who being very desirous to attaine to their proposed ends, enforce their strength ther-vnto: and finding a weakenes in their body to answer their will, they pant & open their mouth, seeking refreshment from the aire to renew their strength: or as *Vatablus* thinks, from men exceeding hungry and thirstie, who open their mouth as if they would draw in the whole aire, and then pant and sigh within themselues, when they finde no full refreshment by it. So he expreseth it, *Tanto desiderio legum tuarum flagrat cor meū, vt subinde cogar haurire aerem propter assidua suspiria.*

How-euer it be, it lets vs see how the hearing, reading, or meditating of Gods word, wakened
in

in *David* a most earnest affection, to haue the light, ioy, grace, and comfort thereof communicated to his owne heart. For in the godly, knowledge of good increaseth desires: and it cannot be exprest, how vehemently their soules long to feele that power and comfort, which they know is in the word; and how sore they are grieved and troubled, when they finde it nor.

And happy were wee, if we could meete the Lord, with thislike affection; that when hee opens his mouth, wee could also open our heart to heare as *David* here doth. *Christus aperit os, vt daret alijs spiritum: David aperuit vt acciperet;* Opening his heart, to receiue the spirit of grace, when God openeth his mouth, in his word to giue it. For it is his promise to vs all; Open thy mouth wide, and I shall fill it: let vs turne it into a prayer, that the Lord, who opened the heart of *Lydia*, would open our heart to receiue grace, when he offers by his word to giue it.

When God opens his mouth to giue, wee should open our hearts to receiue.

VER. 122. *Look vpon me, and be merciful to me; as thou vset to do vnto those that loue thy name.*

From praises, *David* now turns him to prayer. In our best estate, we are farre from that which we should be: our perfection in this life, stands in the acknowledging of our imperfection. Euen when the godly speake any thing

psalme.
In our best estate we haue need to seeke mercy.

A good conscience presents
it selfe vnto
God.

Godly exercised with spirituall
desertions.

To some God
looks in mercy,
to others in
wrath.

to God, out of a good conscience, concerning their vpright affection toward him; at that same time, priue to the conscience of their wants, they take them to prayer, and seek mercy.

Looke vpon me.] This prayer is vsed by the godlie in two respects: first, when they are vn-righteously iudged of men, and charged with that whereof they are not guilty; in this case, they desire that God would look vpon them. For sure it is, vlesse the conscience be sleeping, no man dare present an euill cause to the eye of God: but rather as *Adam* hid himselfe after his transgression; so men, whose consciences are euill, flie the sight of God, and dare not desire him to look vpon them.

And againe, when they are vnder spirituall desertion, and in their sense the countenance of God is turned from them, whose fauour is better then life (which after the manner of men, turning their face from such as they are angry withall, they take vp to be an argument of displeasure) in this case also, they pray that the Lord would looke vpon them: that is, as he expounds himselfe, be fauourable and mercifull to them.

And be mercifull.] This is very well subiorned: for God looks to some in his displeasure; so hee looked to the Egyptians, and vnloosed the pinnes of their chariots, that they could not driue; so he looked to *Sodome*, and rained downe fire and brimstone vpon them. The eyes of the
Lord

Lord, said *Amos*, are vpon the sinfull kingdome to destroy it. *Dauid* knew this; and therefore desires the Lord so to looke on him, as to be mercivnto him.

As thou vsest.] These words containe in effect a reason from Gods constant kindnes toward all his children: Lord doe to me, as thou hast v-
led to doe to others that loue thee. *Oro vt aquali cum illis sententia potiar.* The examples of Gods mercie, are not only registred for our comfort, but for our confirmation. Wherein, we are alway to take heede, that if wee would haue the argument effectuall toward vs, wee make it sure to our selues, that we are of the number of them who loue him.

Examples of Gods mercy on others should confirme vs.

VER. 133. *Direct my footstep in thy word: and let none iniquitie haue dominion ouer me.*

AS before he sought mercy, so now he seeks grace. There are many that lecke mercy to forgiue sin, who seeke not grace to deliuer them from the power of sin: this is to abuse Gods mercy, & turne his grace into wantonness. He that praith for mercy to forgiue the guilt of sin onely, seeks not that by sin hee should not offend God; but that he may sin and not hurt himself: but he who craues deliuerance also from the commanding power and deceit of sin, seeks not only

Mercy & grace are benefitis indiuisible: foolish are they who seek the first and not the second.



The steps of
the Soule are
motions of the
affections.

All creatures,
except man and
apostate An-
gels, are ruled
by Gods word.

onely a benefit to himselfe, but grace also to please & serue the Lord his God. The first is but a louer of himselfe: the second is a louer of God, more then of himselfe. And truly he neuer knew what it was to seek mercy for sin past, who with it also earnestly sought not grace to keep him from sinne in time to come. These benefits cannot be diuided: he who hath not the second (howsoeuer he flatter himselfe) may be assured, hee hath not gotten the first.

My steps.] These steps *Ambrose* restraines *ad profectus anima*, to the progresse of his soule onely: but we may very well thinke, that *Dauid* here commends the whole course of his life to be gouerned by God; both outward, and inward conuersation. The body is carried to good or euill, by steps of the feet: the soule by the motion of affections, is carried either to the Lord, or from him; & therefore he praies that God would direct them: for according to our gouernour or director, so goes the course of our actions.

Thy word.] By the word of the Lord all creatures are ruled. At his word, fire comes downe contrarie to the course of nature; the sun stands or goes back; the moone and starres keep forward their course; yea, the raging sea abides within his prescribed bounds. Strange is it, that man makes it not the rule of his life: but let this be an awe-band to him, That by this word he must be iudged at the length.

And

And let none iniquitie haue dominion.] Dauid takes vp very wisely the controuersie that is betweene Satan and vs : hee seekes by sinne to haue dominion ouer vs. Wherein wee may consider what an vnreasonable Tyrant Satan is, and what iust cause wee haue to wage battell with him. The Lorde our God made vs, hee redeemed vs, hee conserues vs ; none but he can claime any title vnto vs: Is it not then most vnreasonable, that Sathan should seeke superioritie ouer vs, or that we should be so beastly as giue it vnto him?

Neyther is it onely against all equity, but also most hurtfull vnto our selues: for what wages can Satan giue to his slaues, but the wages of sinne, to make them partakers of his owne damnation? Can he giue vnto others, better then he hath to himselfe? Besides this also, he exacts seruice without rest or intermission. Most cruell oppressors, Turks and Pagans, giue some rest to their captiues: Satan giues none: in eating, in sleeping he abuseth them, to serue him.

And which is worst of all ; where this Tyrant sends out sundry officers and seruants, that is, sinfull affections, to exact seruice from thee: they are all so insatiable, that they may well consume thee, spend all thy means, and all thy daies; but thou shalt neuer bee able to satisfie the least of them. And therefore great neede haue we to seeke the helping hand of God against them;

V

praying

Satan an vnreasonable Tyrant.

Seruice to Satan, hurtfull to them who yeeld it.

Satans officers can neuer be satisfied.



praying with *David*, that iniquity may neuer haue dominion ouer vs.

VER. 134. *Deliuier mee from the oppression of men: and I will keepe thy preceptss.*

Armour of the
godly is pati-
ence & prayer.

The wicked
are but rodde
in the hand of
God.

They who per-
secute with
their tongues,
will not faile, if
they might, to
persecute with
their hands al-
so.

NOT one, but manifold are the troubles of the righteous: they haue not onely to wrestle against their owne corruption; but against Satans malice, the pride and enuy of all his wicked impes and instruments. Against them, the best armour we can vse, is patience and prayer: they are but like rodde in the hand of the Lord; as our Sauior said to *Pilat*, *Thou couldst haue no power ouer me, if it were not giuen thee from aboue.* The rodde is not able to moue, but by the hand of him that holdes it: let vs runne to the hand of God: let vs pacifie him by prayer, and wee shall not neede to feare what flesh can doe vnto vs. But aboue all things, let vs beware we fight neuer against the wicked with their own weapons.

From the oppression.] The word is general; & imports not only oppression by violence, but by calumnies and any other iniury. And they are well ioyned together: for such as doe euill one way, will not faile to doe it another. They who loose their tongues, to calumniate Gods seruants, will not faile, if they may, to loose their
handes

handes also to oppresse them ; and such also who oppresse them , will not spare to speake euill of them, that they may iustifie themselves. None of all the seruants of *Saul* would drawe the sword to slay the seruants of the Lord , albeit their Master commanded them : onely *Doeg* , who before had calumniated *Dauid* (and so by his tongue had begunne the persecution) spared not to murder with the bloudie swords , such seruants of God , as for Gods sake had shewed fauour to *Dauid*. Let vs not looke for better from them whose tongues are bent to speake euill of the seruants of God , but that their handes also , when they may haue the occasion , will bee ready to shedde their bloud.

Of men.] The word he vseth, is *Adam* : this is the first name that God gaue to man after his fall ; signifying earth, or redde earth : and it sheweth how weake and silly a creature man hath made himselfe by his sinne. The consideration of it confirms *Dauid* against his enemies , that they were but men of earth : if we could remember, we would neuer be troubled at their inimity ; *Who art thou Iacob, that thou shouldst feare a mortall man ? and all flesh is grasse.*

And againe, the consideration of this serues to humble the pride of man : Sith they are but men of clay , why waxe they proude to oppresse others ? It was a very worthie warning , which a certaine Ambassadour gaue once

Man by sinne
is become a
weake and silly
creature.

A preseruatiue
against pride.



Benefits should
binde vs to the
loue and obe-
dience of God
who gaue
them.

once to *Alexander* the great, that flies and wormes at length would eate the flesh of Lions. If proude men considered this, That they are but earth, and that shortly their beautifull bodies will become carcases to bee eaten by the wormes; it would abate their naturall pride, by which they trample downe others, poorer and weaker then they, vnder their feete.

And I will keepe.] The benefites or deliuerances of God, obtained by prayer, should not bee abused to licentiousnesse, to nourish our selues in our sinnes, and wonted security: but the more wee receiue from him, the more should wee acknowledge our selues bound and obliged to him. Otherwise, if benefites binde vs not, if mercies allure vs not, if the cordes of his loue drawe vs not, to be thankfull seruants to our God; how inexcusable are wee?

VER. 135. *Shew the light of thy countenance vpon thy servant: and teach me thy Statutes.*

THis verse contains a petition, which in this Booke of the Psalmes *David* frequently makes to God; as ye may see, *Ps. 4. 6. Psal. 67. 1. Psal. 80. 3. 7. & 19.* For vnderstanding whereof, wee are to see what the light of Gods countenance is.

A common
light externall.

There is a common light externall, whereby the

the Maieſty of God ſhines after a ſort vnto all his creatures. There is a common light alſo inter-nall, whereby he illuminates euery one that com-meth into the world. This is the light of the minde and conſcience, communicated both to iuſt and vniuſt: but here he ſeekes a greater bene-fite then any of theſe; to wit, a declaration of Gods ſpeciall fauour and loue toward him. This is called a ſhewing of his face, or the light of his countenance. *Crassius de Deo ſacra Scriptura interdum loquitur, ſermones ad Naturam homi-nis attemperans*; The ſpirit of God in holy Scripture, attemperes his ſpeech to mans nature: and ſo here he puts the face of God, for the fauor of God.

Salomon ſaith, that the wrath of a King is the meſſenger of death; but in the light of the Kings countenance is life: and his fauour is as the cloude of ſlaterraine. The downe-look of *Ahaſuerus* confounded *Haman*. It was *Absaloms* ſpeech to *Joab*, ſuppoſe in hypocriſie; That it was better to him to be baniſhed, then abide in Ieruſalem, wanting the Kings countenance. If ſuch mo-ment bee in the countenance of earthly Kings; what is the face of the King of kings? Sure-ly, ſuch as knowe him, reioyce to behold his face continually: and it is death to them to want it.

Certain it is, the Lord looks alway fauorably vp-on his owne elect, but he doth not alway ſhew it;

A common
light inter-nall.

A ſpeciall light
inter-nall.

Baſil. in Pſ. 119.

Angry face of
God moſt fear-
full.
Prou. 16.

How God for-
ſakes his chil-
dren.

Not according
to his truth, but
our sense.

Gods counte-
nance illumi-
nates the
minde, and
changes the
heart of him,
vpon whom
he lookes.
Amb.

1. Cor. 4. 6.

no, not vnto themselues. Before their effectuall calling, in themselues they differ nothing from the children of wrath; albeit in Gods counsell there be a great difference: and after their calling, for the tryall of their faith, he many times forsakes them; not according to his truth, which is vnchangeable, but according to their sense, which is changeable. He loues them, but will not let them knowe that hee loues them: but sometime will frown vpon them; as *Ioseph* did on his brethren, euen then when his affection was most strong toward them. And then the want of the light of the Sunne in the firmament, is not so heavy to naturall men, as this is to a Christian, To want the sight of Gods fauourable face: and therfore is it, that *Dauid* heere prayeth so earnestly, *Shew the light of thy countenance vpon me.*

And teach me.] As the sunne makes other things bright, whereupon it shines: so the countenance of GOD workes light in that soule vpon which he looketh fauourably; *Cum sapientem videris, cognosce quia descendit super eum Dei gloria: illuminauit eius mentem scientia fulgore.* So that this is a speciall argument of Gods fauourable face looking vpon a man, when his minde is illuminate, and God hath taught him to knowe his way, and giuen him grace to follow it; according to that of the Apostle: *God who commanded light to shine out of darkenesse, is he who hath shined in our hearts, to giue vs the light of the knowledge*

knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Iesus Christ.

VER. 136. Mine eyes gush out Rivers of water, because they keepe not thy Lawe.

MAny a time hath *David* protested his great ioy: now here he makes mention of his exceeding great griefe. We haue no ioy without griefe in this life: neyther yet, thanks to God, haue we griefe without ioy. As the wine failed in that banquet, whereat Christ was present: so oftentimes failes ioy, euen in the heart where Christ dwels. But as in the one he turned water into wine: so in the other will hee turne all sorrow into ioy. To haue ioy without griefe, is the condition of them who are glorified in heauen. To haue griefe without ioy, is the condition of them who are damned in hell; I meane, to be both without sense and hope of ioy: But the godly on earth haue their ioy mixed with griefe, and griefe tempered with ioy: and albeit sometime they want the sense of ioy, yet do they neuer want all hope and expectation of ioy.

He prayed before, ver. 37. that the Lord would turne away his eyes from regarding of vanity: now hee shewes how hee praised it. He was so farre from delighting to behold vanity, that he mourned when he saw the vanity & wickednesse

No ioy in this
life without
griefe, nor yet
griefe without
ioy.



Of the right
gouernement
of our eyes.

of other men. God who hath made the eyes to be Organs of sight, hath also made them to be Conduits of teares: if we mourne as we should, when we looke to the creatures, we shall not easily be snared by them. If we look to vnreasonable creatures, we may see lying vpon them, the fruits of that curse, which our sinne procured: if we look to reasonable creatures, our selues or others; what a great dis-conformity is betweene vs and the holy Lawe of the Lord our God? If these moue vs to mourning, the power of sinne shall be greatly restrained. *Malum innatum*, that seekes to breake out by looking and speaking: and *Malum seminatum*, that seekes to come in by hearing and looking: both of these euils shall greatly be weakened, if euery thing we looke to moue vs to mourning; as iustly it may in the respects afore-said.

Reasons mou-
ing vs to
mourning.

1. If we mourn
not for other
mens sinnes,
they become
ours.

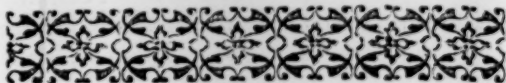
And to moue vs yet more to this mourning disposition, let vs consider two things: the euill we incurre if we mourne not; and the good shall ensue to vs, if we mourn for the sinnes of others. As for the first: Among many wayes whereby the sinnes of other men become ours, this is also one; If we know their iniquities, and be not grieved therewith: and therefore are the Corinthians reproved, that they sorrowed not for the incestuous man that was among them; by so doing they were defiled by his sinne, & became one polluted lump with him. And *Ezech. 9.* Not on-
ly

ly is iudgement determined vpon the committers of sinne; but of such also as mourned for sin: they are involued in the same iudgement, as partakers of the same sinnes, by reason that they mourned not for them.

And as for the great good we get by mourning for the sinnes of the wicked, whereby they dishonour the Lord our God; it is also euident. *Blessed* (saith our Sauour) *are they that mourne, for they shall be comforted.* When the heauen waters the earth in due season, there followes a fruitfull increafe: but when the earth waters the heauen, then shall follow a more plentifull harvest of all spirituall comfort. And this is done, when a sinner powres the teares of his penitent heart into the bosome of God: then the heauens are watered by the earth. For the teares of the godly fall not to the ground: the Lord gathers them like most pretious pearles vnto him, and puts them in his bottell, and they bring still increafe of comfort to such as shed them. They are sowne like good seede on earth; the first fruite whereof is reaped on earth, but the fulness thereof in heauen: according to that of the Psalmist, *They that sowe in teares shall reape in ioy.*

2. If we mourn
many blessings
follow it.





Z A D E.

VER. 137. *Righteous art thou, O Lord: and iust are thy iudgements.*

A three-fold
comfort that
sustained Da-
uid.



Eere *Dauid*, sore troubled with griefe for the wickednesse of his enemies; yea, tempted greatly to impatience, and distrust, by looking to their prosperous estate, notwithstanding their so grosse impiety; doth now shew vnto vs a three-fold ground of comfort, which in this dangerous tentation vpheld him. The first is, a consideration of that which God is in himselfe; namely, iust and righteous: the second, a consideration of the equity of his word: thirdly, of his constant truth, declared in his working and doing according to his word. When we find our selues tempted to distrust, by looking to the prosperity of the wicked; let vs looke vp to God, consider his nature, his word, his workes, and we shall finde comfort.

1. A meditation
of the righte-
ousnesse of
God.

Righteous art thou] There is the first; a meditation of the righteoulnesse of Gods nature: he alters not with times, he changes not with persons, he

he is alway, and vnto all, one and the same righteous and holy God. Righteousnesse is essentiall to him; it is himselfe: and he can no more defraude the godly of their promised comforts, nor let the wicked go unpunished in their sinnes, then hee can denie himselfe to be God, which is impossible.

Just are thy iudgements.] The second ground of *Dauids* comfort, is heere and in the next verse.

VER. 138. *Thou hast commanded iustice by thy Testimonies, and truth especially.*

AS the tree is, so is the fruit. From so righteous a God nothing can proceede but righteousness: God forbid, that the Iudge of all the world should doe vnrighteously. This meditation of the equiety of Gods command, flowing from his most righteous nature, confirms *Dauid* in this sure conclusion; It cannot be but well with them who walke after his word: and by the contrary, such as goe a whooring from it cannot but make a miserable end, how-euer they prosper for a time.

And out of this we may further learn, how the law of God expresseth to vs the liuely lineaments of his image: for from his righteous nature flowe his commandements, commanding righteousness. This lets vs see how fearfull an euill sinne

2. A meditation of the equiety of Gods commands, flowing from his righteous nature.

The Lawe of God represents to vs the image of God.

How horrible
an euill sinne is.



If any man de-
sire to know
what will be his
end, let him in-
quire at Gods
word.

sinne is: sith it is a transgression of that holy law, which flowes from Gods righteous nature, it is a direct impugning & violating of the diuine nature, so farre as the creature may. The lawes of Kings may be broken, and their persons not touched, farre lesse their nature violated; yea, oft-times their nature likes of that euill which their lawe forbids. It is not so with the lawe of God: it flowes from his righteous nature., and God and his lawe are so straitly vnited, that the breaking of his lawe is an impugning of his very nature, so farre as the creature may; as I haue said already.

By thy Testimonies.] The word of God is called his Testimony, both because it testifies his will, which he will haue vs to doe; as also because it testifies vnto men truely what shall become of them, whether good or euill. Men by nature are curious to know their end, rather then carefull to mend their life; and for this cause seeke answers where they neuer get good: but if they would know, let them goe to the word and testimony; they need not to seeke any other Oracle. If the word of God testifie good things vnto them, they haue cause to reioyce: if otherwise it witness euill vnto them, let them hast to preuent it, or else it shall assuredly ouertake them.

Ver.

VER. 139. *My zeale hath euen consumed me, because mine enemies haue forgotten thy word.*

THroughout this Psalm, we see that *David* cannot satisfie himselfe, in declaring the loue he had to Gods word, for that comfort which hee had felt in it; as likewise his insatiable affection, crauing more comfort by it. What he speakes of himself, he speakes it not like that Pharise, who boasted of his good, nor mourning for his euill, nor yet longing for better. Such presumption is farre from the godly: If at any time they make mention of any good disposition in them, they doe it to the glory of God, from whom all good comes; and to comfort themselves for the beginnings of Gods grace in them: but still they know their wants, and mourne for them. Neuer contented in this life with the grace receiued, with earnest affection they crie for more.

Three things haue we to consider in this his protestation: first, the nature; secondly, the sorts; thirdly, the effects of zeale. As for the nature of zeale; It is a mixed affection of griefe and anger, flowing from loue: for what a man loues earnestly, he is carefull to see it honoured; and, by the contrary, grieved when it is dishonoured.

The sorts of it are many: for according as our loue and griefe are, so is our zeale. If our loue be vpon

The loue which godly men carry to the word cannot be satisfied in this life.

The nature of zeale.

Sundry sorts of zeale.



Rom. 10. 2.
Ambrose.

The effects of
holy zeale.

Rom. 12.

vpon the right obiects, moderate, in due measure, it causes a zeale which is holy and spirituall: otherwise, if our loue be inordinate, it begets a carnall or inordinate zeale. Sometime the zeale is not vpon the right obiect; and then it may be great, but it cannot be good: such is the zeale of Heretiques, who compasse Sea and Land to make one of their owne profession. Sometime againe the zeale is on the right obiect, not in the due measure: eyther too colde, which is remission; or too hote, which is superstition. Of these, saith the Apostle, *It is a zeale, but not according to knowledge. Zelus ad mortem, non ad vitam*; a zeale which tends to death, not vnto life.

The effects of *Dauids* zeale he toucheth, when he saith, it had consumed him. Affections of the soule are very forcible to moue the body. A sorrowfull heart, saith *Salomon*, dries vp the bones: But men should carefully marke what spirit inflames their zeale, and what zeale moueth their bodies. There are som, who vnder shew of zeale, or at least because they thinke it zeale, neglect the duetie which they owe to their bodies; not remembring, the seruice which God craues of the body is a reasonable seruice, not vnreasonable. Others with their zeale fight against the Gospell; so did *Paul* before his conuersion. Let vs try the Spirits, and see that our zeale be according to knowledge.

For these two, Knowledge & Zeale, are compared

pared by *Bernard* to the two wings of a fowle: the Bird that hath but one wing, falleth the more that it mindeth to flie. These are two excellent giftes, Knowledge and Zeale: but if the one be without the other, it were better to want it.

And now sith zeale must be tryed by knowledge first; let vs consider that to be the zeale of God, which fights with the armor of God, the Worde, Prayer, and patient Suffering. That againe is a zeale, but without knowledge, which fights with carnall armour, hatred, cuill speaking, and bloody persecution: such a zeale breedes superstition; spares not to deale cruelly with all such as are contrary minded. By this rule, Papists may trie of what spirit they are.

Because mine enemies.] *Dauid* had many enemies; but none, except such as had cast the Lawe of God behinde their backe. It is a great comfort to the godly, to see that they haue no enemies but such as are enemies to God.

VER. 140. *Thy word is proued most pure: and thy seruant loneth it.*

HEere is the third ground of comfort which sustained *Dauid*; to wit, that Gods word was tryed to be true, by his constant and continuall working according to it. To expresse this, he compares the word of God, here &
Psal.

Knowledge & Zeale two wings of the soule.

How true zeale may be tried from false.



Who are enemies to godly men.

3. A meditation of Gods constant and continual working according to his word.

Psal. 12. vnto golde tryed in the fire; which not onely indures, but becomes finer, when all refuse or counterfeit matter faileth and vanisheeth. So will Dauid say, when the fire of affliction was kindled, I haue scene all comforts perish; onely thy word proued a word of consolation: for the more the flames of affliction increase, the more powerfully doth the word expresse that hidden vertue of consolation, which is in it. And because he had so felt it, so now he speakes of it.

As God hath a mouth to speake, so a hand to doe, as continuall experience hath proued.



Where it is to be marked, for our greater comfort, that albeit the time be not yet come, of the full accomplishment of Gods word, in the which the least ior thereof must be fulfilled; yet the Lord giues vs as many present proofes of it by experience, as may confirme vs in assurance of the verity thereof. If we be wise, to marke the working of the Lord, we shall finde witnesses in euery age, in euery yeare (yea, in euery moneth and day) to confirme vs, that as God hath a mouth to speake, so hath he an hand by which he workes according to his word; giuing ioyfull deliuerance to his own, out of all their troubles, and rendring iudgement to his enemies, according to their pride.

Loue in God the fountaine of all his benefites.
Loue in man the fountaine of all his seruice.



And thy seruant loueth it.] Loue in God is the fountaine of all his benefites, extended to vs; and loue in man is the fountaine of all our seruice and obedience to our God. He loued vs first to doe vs good: and hereof it comes, that we haue grace

to loue him next, and doe him seruice. Loue is such a duetie, as the want whereof cannot be excused in any; for the poorest both may, and should loue him: yet without it, all the rest thou canst doe in his seruice, is nothing; nay, not if thou shouldst giue al thy goods to the poore, and offer thy bodie to be burned. Small sacrifices, flowing from faith and loue, are welcome to him; where greater without these are but abomination vnto him. Prooves of both we haue in the Widowes myte, and *Caines* rich oblation: wherof, the one was reiected, the other receiued. Happy are we, though we cannot say, We haue don as God commands; yet, if out of a good hart we can say, We loue to do what he commands.

VER. 141. *I am small and despised; yet doe I not forget thy precepts.*

HEE renues againe the protestation of his vnfaigned affection toward Gods word, with an amplification therof: that albeit his estate was meane, and him selfe despised, and contemned also of his enemies; yet he did not forget the word of God. There are many who can professe Religion, as long as they see peace and honour following it; who rather then they would indure trouble and contempt, will vterly forsake it. The Samaritans could very wel

Temporizers
in Religion.

Carol. Sigon. de
rep. heb. lib. 1. c. 3



They are little
esteemed of
men, who are
great in the
account of
God.

Macar. hom. 9.

reioyce in their new Temple, built on Mount Garizin; boasting that they were the posterity of Ephraim, companions to the Iewes, no lesse worshippers of God then they were; having also a Temple of their owne: but when they saw that Antiochus Epiphanes, King of Syria, did cruelly persecute the Iewes for the worshipping of God; then did they alter their profession: they called themselves, not Israelites, but Sidonians; and that their Temple was dedicate, not to Iehoua, but to Iupiter Cretensis: and so eschued they the fury of the persecutor. Many such Samaritan professors are in this age, who, to eschue the present wrath of men, spare not to renounce Religion; and so cast themselves in danger of the fearefull wrath of God, whom they will finde a consuming fire. From such temporizing, and counterfeite dissembling, the Lord preserve vs; and blesse vs with this grace of a constant affection toward Gods word, in every state of life.

Againe, it is no new thing to see them small and despised in mens estimation, who with the Lord are highly esteemed; being men, as here David was, according to Gods owne heart. Honourable in the eyes of the world was that rich glutton, clothed in purple; despised was Lazarus: but ye see, the one was an heire of glory; the other but an inheritor of hell. A godly man is an excellent treasure in an earthen vessell; compared by Macarim, to a pretious pearle in a contemptible

tible purle ; despised by many , because they know not the jewell that is within it. *The worla knowes them not, because it knowes not the Lord, whose sonnes they are: neyther doth it yet appeare what they shall be.* Nazianzen for this compares men in this world, to those who in a Stage-play represent another thing then they are: there the beggar is busked like a King ; and by the contrary. But when the Play is done, and their garments layed by, then shall euery one of them appeare such as they are. For this, Saint James giues vs a profitable instruction, *That wee should not haue the faith of Christ in respect of persons* ; to honour a man onely for his riches, or despite an other for his pouertie : but where wee see the grace of Christ, be they rich or poore, we ought for Christs sake to haue them in honourable estimation.

Yet doe I not forget thy precepts.] We see by experience, that our affection leaues any thing from the time it goes out of our remembrance : but earnest loue, cuer renues remembrance of that which is beloued. The first step of defection is, to forget what God hath commanded, & what we are obliged in ducty to doe to him : for vpon this, easily followes the offending of God by our transgression. Such beasts as did not chew their cudde, vnder the lawe were accounted vncleane, and not meet to be sacrificed to God : that was but a figure, signifying vnto vs, That a man

1. Ioh. 3.

Persons should
be regarded for
their faith.

1am. 2.

Obluion of
our ducty, is
the first steppe
to defection.

who hath receiued good things from God, and doth not think vpon them, cannot feel the sweetnesse of them; & so cannot be thankfull to God.

VER. 142. *Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness: and thy Law is truth.*

What a sure
comfort we
haue by the
word of God.

David considers here two things in the worde of God: first, the equity of it; next, the eternitie of it. And by these two he sustaines himselfe against all tentations, wherewith hee was compassed; and namely, the contempt of men. Sith the Lawe of God is truth, and his righteousness euerlasting; they cannot be deceived who depend vpon it: and they who liue in a contrary disposition vnto it, cannot be but miserable eternally. Neyther is it enough for vs to know this generally, as many do; but with *David*, wee should earnestly pray wee may bee taught by his word, stablished by his truth, rectified by his righteousness: *Hac conciliant sempiterna bona*; that so we may be partakers of that euerlasting good which cometh by them.

VER. 143. *Trouble and anguish are com vpon me; yet thy commandments are my delight.*

Albeit *David* was laden with heauy troubles, yet did he neuer quit his affection toward the

the word of God. Where if it be enquired, why did the Lord lay such heavy trouble vpon a man whom he loued so dearely? and why suffers he his children to be so hardly handled, in this life; for whom he hath prepared a blessed fellowship, and communion with himselfe in the life to come? The reason is, because as saith the Apostle; *Neede so requires. Necessaria est crux peregrinanti*, The crosse is necessary for a pilgrime: for by it sin is subdued, pride weakned, patience and all other graces of the spirit increased. It workes a contempt of this world; and prepares vs for the kingdome of God.

Of this, let such as are vnder the crosse, learne with patience to beare it; and others, who know not yet what it is, prepare them-selues for it. For, if they bee the kindly sonnes of God, they shall not eschew it: *For hee chastiseth every one whom he receiues.*

Are my delight.] This is strange, that in the midst of anguish he hath delight; yea indeed, the sweetnesse of Gods word is best perceiued vnder the bitterness of the crosse: the ioy of Christ, and the ioy of the world cannot consist together. A heart delighted with worldlie ioy cannot feele the consolations of the spirite; the one of these destroyes the other: But in sanctified trouble, the comforts of GODs word are felt and perceiued in most sensible manner.

The Crosse is necessary for a Pilgrime; and why?

The kindly sonnes of God cannot want a Crosse.

Carnal and spirituall ioy consist not together.

Delight in the
word an argu-
ment of true
Godline.

Many a time hath *Dauid* protested this delight of his in the vvorde of GOD: and truly it is a great argument of godlinesse, vvhen men come not onely to a reuerence of it; but to loue it and to delight in it. Let this bee considered of those vnhappy men, who heare it of custome, and count it but a wearinesse.

VER. 144. *The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting. Grant mee vnderstanding, and I shall liue.*

The fearefull
recompence of
them who loue
not Gods word
Vatab.

THis verse is one with the 142. saue only that he adioynes to it his accustomed petition for vnderstanding, that hee may liue. *Nam proprie homines non viuunt sine intelligentia diuina legis*: for it is no life which men haue, vvho are destitute of this knowledge. The vvord of God is contemned of none, but such as knowe not the excellencie thereof. And they are repayed with this fearefull recompence; that because they knowe not, nor cannot account of it, the light, the vertue, the grace thereof is not dilated toward them; but they abide still in their naturall darknes and death. From which most vnhappy condition, the Lord deliuer vs.



KOPH.

VER. 145. *I haue cryed with my whole heart: hear me, O Lord, and I will keep thy statutes.*

IN this verse, wee haue three things: a petition, Heare mee; a reason, I haue cryed with mine whole heart; a promise, I will keepe thy statutes. The reason is first sette downe; which in effect is this: O Lord, thou hast bound thy selfe by thy promise to answer them who call vpon thee: and thou hast not at any time, sent them away comfortlesse, that call vpon thee in spirit and truth; yea, thou hast been found of them, vvhose sought thee nor. Then Lord, seeing thou hast giuen me this grace, to cry to thee with my whole heart; shew me also this grace, that thou maiest heare me.

As the husbandman seeks no increase, of that land wherein he hath sowne no seed: so hee that prayeth not, and seekes not the Lord while hee may be found; what comfort can hee expect in the time of his trouble? Our prayers are seede, sowne not in the earth, but in the heauen; wee

X 4

cast

Three things
in this verse.

Praier is a seede
which now wee
should sowe
plentifully, that
in haruest wee
may reap the
fruit thereof.



Feruecy and
zeale of heart
required in
praier.

Ambrose,
Psal. 119.

Euery crying
pearces not
heauen.

The voice of
the wicked in
praier auailes
not.

cast them into the bosome of God: he that sowes sparingly, shall reape sparingly; if wee looke for a plentiful harvest, let vs sowe more abundantly in the seede time: for euery praier, feruentlie and in faith sent vp to God, either presently returns with some good; or then laies good vp in store for vs, which we shall enioy heereafter.

The feruecy of his praier he expresseth, when he saith that he cryed: it notes *Animi propensione*, the earnestnes of his soule: without this, the earnestnes of the tongue is but *Ludibriū quoddā, quod deus non honore, sed contumelia afficitur*; a mockery of God, and a dishonouring of him. *Non vocis magnitudine, sed cordis magnanimitate clamandum est; non sono corporis, sed cogitationum sublimitate, & concentu virtutum.* It is not by lowdnes of the voice, but stoutnes of the heart; nor by sound of the body, but by sublimity of our cogitations, and by consent of vertues, that wee must cry vnto God.

When *Israell* was straighted at the red sea; the Armie of Egyptians vpon their backe, and the sea before them; and in their iudgement they saw no outgaite (but lookt either to be deuoured by the sword, or drowned by the water) no doubt there was among the people murmuring, and crying, with dolefull lamentation: but what? *Clamabat populus et non audiebatur: tacebat Moses & audiebatur*; the people cryed and were not heard: *Moses* is silent, and God heares him; for his

his heart was fixed vpon God ; waiting till God should shew the way of deliuerance , which they could not see. What auails the voice of the wicked, who honour God with their lips , but their heart is far from him ? *Iniusta anima deo mortua est*, The soule of an vnrighteous man is dead vn-to God : *Nihil in illa sublime, nihil magnificum est*. There is no high , no excellent thing in it, which can go vp to the most high, and excellent God.

With mine whole heart.] He amplifies this yer further, when he saith , that hee cryed with his whole heart. *Non solum ergo clamandum est; sed et toto corde clamandum*. For, as a man cryes most loudly, whē he cries with al his mouth opened : so a man praies most effectually, when hee praies with his whole heart. Neither doth this speech declare onely the seruency of his affection ; but imports also , that it was a great thing which he sought from God. *Et tu cum oras, magna ora: id est, ora qua aeterna sunt, non caduca*. And thou when thou prayest, pray for great things ; for things induring , not for things perishing: praie not for siluer, it is but rust ; nor for gold, it is but metall; nor for possessions, it is but earth. *Ista oratio ad deum non peruenit: such prayer ascends not to God. Non audit deus nisi quod dignum est eius beneficijs*. Hee is a great God ; and esteemes himselfe dishonoured, when great things, with a great affection are not sought from him.

Great things
should be asked
from the
great God.

Heare

A holy Alphabet

Heare me, and I will keep.] Of this petition and promise, see verſe 8. 33. 44. 88. 134. 146.

VER. 146. *I called vpon thee: ſaue me; and I will keepe thy teſtimonies.*

Praier, a ſeruice due to God only.

HE inſiſts in his former petition, expounding euery part of it. He proteſted before, hee cryed with his whole heart: now he declares to whom hee cryed. Prayer is a point of ſeruice due vnto God. Only he craued before that God would hear him: now he ſhewes wherein; *Saue mee*: and thirdly, hee renewes his promiſe; and the repetition thereof tells vs, that the promiſes of thankfulnes in Gods children, are no ſodaine nor vaniſhing motions, but ſettled concluſions.

He that ſeeks from God, ſhould alſo offer to him.

And againe, it teacheth vs, that as Gods children, are carefull to ſeek from God, that which they neede: ſo are they carefull to giue vnto him, that which he requires; to witte, praiſe, and obedience. Otherway, where men ſeek benefits frō God, the fruit whereof they minde not to return vnto him; either they get not that which they ſeek: or if they doe, they get in his diſpleaſure, as *Iſraell* got quailles. If we would ſo ſeek, that we may obtaine; let vs not ſeek that we may beſtow vpon our owne luſtes: which *S. James* reprocues; but that we may aduance his glory.

Ver.

VER. 147. *I preuented the morning light, and cryed: for I waited thy word.*

HE amplifies, yet further, the first reason for which he desires the Lord to heare him; taken from his earnest feruency in prayer: and it is written for our instruction, to learne vs continuance in praier. It is required by precept, *Luke 21. Watch and pray continually*: and againe, *1. Thes. 5. Pray continually*. For example also, at midnight morning, and at noone tide, did *Dauid* pray; yea seuen times in the day: all the night long did our Sauour pray; *Non precationis indigens auxilio, sed statuens tibi imitationis exemplum*: not standing himselſe in neede of the help of prayer; but setting down, to thee, an example of prayer for imitation. *Ille pro te rogans pernoctabat, vt tu disceres quomodo pro te rogares*; when he praied for thee, he prayed all the night long; that thou also mightſt learn how to pray for thy ſelſe. *Qui rogat itaque, ſemper roget: & ſi non ſemper precatur, paratum ſemper habeat precantis affectum*. He therfore that praies, let him pray alway: or if he do not alway pray, let him alwaies haue ready the affection of prayer.

But the manner of ſpeech is to be marked; hee ſaith, he preuented the morning watch: Thereby declaring that he liued, as it were, in a ſtrife with time; carefull that it ſhould not ouerunne him.

Continuance
in praier rec-
mended vnto vs

Ambroſe,
in *Plal. 119.*



How time
poſſe away and
we ſhould ſtrive
with it.

him. He knew that time postes away; and in running-by, wearcth man to dust, and ashes: But, *David* preassed to get before it, by doing some good in it, before that it should spurre away from him. And this care which *David* had of euerie day; alas, how may it make them ashamed, who haue no care of their whole life! He was afraide to lose a day; they take no thought, to lose moneths and yeares without doing good in them: yea, hauing spent the three ages of their life, in vanity and licentiousnes; scarce will they consecrate their old and decrepit age to the Lord.

I waited on thy word.] See verse. 43. 81.

VER. 148. *Mine eyes preuent the night watch, to meditate in thy word.*

How a man on earth may imitate the life of Angels.

HIS former purpose is yet continued, declaring his indefatigable perseuerance in prayer. Oh, that we could learne at him to vse our time well! At euening he lay down with praers, and teares; at midnight hee rose to giue thanks; he got vp before the morning light, to call on the Lord. This is to imitate the life of Angels: who euer are delighted to beholde the face of God; singing alwaie a new song without wearying. This is to beginne our heaven vpon earth: oh, that we could alway remember it; *An nescis o homo, quod primitias tui cordis ac vocis quotidie*

Ambrose.

quotidie Deo debemus: Knowst thou not, O man, that thou owest every day the first fruits of thy heart and tongue to the Lord our God? Shouldst thou thinke of any thing, before that first thou remember him in the morning? or should thy tongue speake of any thing, before the first fruits of thy speech be offered vnto him by prayer, and praying of his holy name?

The first fruits of our hart and tongue every morning should be offered to God.



Gold professors reprov'd, who spend all their time on the world.

But alas, the coldnesse of this age in worshipping the Lord, in praising him who is most worthy to be pray'd; is here greatly conuinc'd: no time of the night will they spend in prayer; yea, in the day time they had rather doe any thing then be exercis'd in prayer and praying; swearing and sleeping in the very time of diuine seruice, when others beside them are intertaining fellowship with God, by the exercise of the word and prayer. If oftentimes they whose lippes are praising him, haue their hearts farre from him; how farre is thy heart from him, who canst not do so much as with thy lips to praise him when thou shouldst? O man, wilt thou remember that no time shall render thee comfort in the houre of death, but that which thou hast spent in the seruice of thy God? And if thou canst not consecrate all thy dayes, and euery houre of the day vnto the Lord; yet why wilt thou not diuide thy time rightly? that where thou giuest one houre to the world, and the affaires thereof; why wilt thou not giue another to the Lord, & the works of

If they cannot giue all, at least they should giue the halfe of it vnto God.

A holy Alphabet

of his worship? In this point the Lord make vs more wise, & giue vs grace to redeeme the time.

To meditate in thy word. See ver. 15. 23. 27. 48. 78. 99. 148.

VER. 149. *Heare my voice, according to thy louing kindnesse: O Lord quicken me according to thy iudgement.*

Prayer mitigates trouble.

THis is a petition frequently vsed by all the children of God; That he would hear them: and not without great cause; for the heauy heart is eased and disburdened by praiſe: and it brings a present mitigation of their troubles, when they feele in effect that God hears them. Beside that, it renders vnto them vnſpeakable comfort for the time to come: it confirms them against the feare of death, and makes them with boldnesse to goe out of the body, that they may be with the Lord; becauſe by manifold experience, they did finde in the body that God heard them, and gaue them comfortable acceſſe to his Throne of grace.

The common argument of all Gods children in Prayer.

Amb in Ps. 119

According to thy louing kindnesse.] This is the great and maine argument, whereby all Gods children moue the Lord to compaſſion; namely, his own fauour and louing kindnesse. *Semper homo, etiam si sanctus, si iustus sit, debet orare ut exaudiat eum Dominus secundum misericordiam suam.*

suam, non secundum merita virtutis alienius; quia rara virtus, multa peccata: A man, were he neuer so iust or holy, should euermore pray that God would heare him, according to Gods mercy, not according to the merit of his vertue whatsoeuer; because in the best men their vertues are rare, their sinnes are many. It is true, they vse also secondary arguments, taken from God his graces in themselves; as, that they loue him, or feare him, or call vpon him: but these in effect are but the alledging of the conditions, whereupon God out of his kindnesse hath made the promises; and so being his owne graces, freely giuen, may lawfully be vied to moue the Lord to the performance of his promises.

Quicken me. See ver. 37. 40. 50. 88. 93.

According to thy iudgement.] Iudgement is sometime taken for the execution of Gods threatnings against transgressors: and this, *Dauid* declines, *Psal.* 143. *Enter not into iudgement with me.* Sometime it is taken for the performance of his promises, according to his word: and this, *Dauid* desires; as in this Verse. See ver. 7. 13. 20. 30. 39. 43. 52. 62. 66. 75. 84. 102. 106. 108. 120. 137. 149. 156. 160. 164. 175.

Is from his mercy, not from their merit.

How *Dauid* desires God should deale with him in iudgement,

VER. 150. *They drawe neere that follow after malice, and are farre from thy Lawe.*

The godly are
a mark of con-
tradiction to
Satan and al his
instruments.

Comfort a-
gainst the con-
tempt of men.

HEc reiterates againe his complaint against his enemies; whom he describes after this manner: That toward God they were impious men, farre from his Lawe: toward *David* they were malicious; yea, such as followed malice, and hunted after all occasions to doe him euill. This is the condition of the children of God: as their head and Lord Christ Iesus was set for a signe of contradiction; so is it with his seruants, they are set as a marke & butte, whereat Satan and his instruments shoot all the arrowes of their indignation: but in vaine; for God is their buckler.

And truly it should greatly comfort all the godly, to remember, that such as are their enemies, are Gods enemies also: sith they are farre from the obedience of Gods Law, what maruell they be also farre from that duety of loue, which they owe vnto vs? It may content vs, to want that comfort in men, which otherwise we might and would haue; when wee consider that God wants his glory in them. Let this sustaine vs, when we see that Godlesse men are enemies vnto vs.

Ver.

VBR. 151. *Thou art neere, O Lord: for all thy commandements are true.*

From the meditation of his enemies malice, hee returnes againe to the meditation of Gods mercie: and so it is expedient for vs to doe, least the number, and greatnesse, and maliciousnesse of our enemies, make vs to faint when we looke vnto them. It is good, that we should cast our eyes vppward to the Lord: then shall we see they are not so neere to hurt vs, as the Lord our God is neere to helpe vs; and that there is no euill in them which we haue cause to feare, but we shall finde in our God a contrary good, sufficient to preferue vs.

Otherwise we could not indure, if when Satan and his instruments come neere to pursue vs, the Lord were not neere to protect vs. Comfortable is it, that when *Laban* with great fury followed *Jacob*, the Lorde stepped in betweene them, and commanded *Laban* not to hurt him: and when Satan many a time intended to destroy *Iob*, hee found that hee could not, because the Lord was a hedge and defence vnto him. This is of GODs marueilous working, that wee being in the middest of the wicked, who like so many rauening Wolues, thirst for our blood; and before the mouth of that roaring Lion, that seekes to destroy vs, we should still be
Y preferred:

No enemy so
neere to hurt
vs, as God is
neere to helpe
vs.

Comfortable
examples ther-
of.

Vpon what
condition will
the Lord be
neere vnto vs.

Amb. in 2^d salm.
119.

If we in our
heart be also
neere vnto him.

preserued: for the which we may giue thanks with *Dauid*; It is so, O Lorde, because thou art neere vnto vs.

But let vs remember, if wee would haue this presence of the Lorde rendring vs comfort, wee must also be moued by it to render him reuerence. *Prope est omnibus, qui vbique adest: nec refugere eum possumus si offendimus, nec fallere si delinquimus, nec amittere si colamus*: He is neere vnto all, who is euery where present: if we offend him, wee cannot flie from him: if we sinne, we cannot siele nor couer his eyes: if wee worshippe him, we cannot want him neere to vs in all our necessities. *De sole non dubitas quod vbique resplendeat: de Deo dubitas quod non vbique fulgeat?* Thou doubtest not of the Sunne, that it shines into euery place; why doubtest thou that the Lord is present in euery place?

Be where thou wilt, hee is neere vnto thee; be thou also in thy affection neere vnto him, to feare and loue him: in all thy wayes walke with him, as *Enoch* did: set him alway in thy sight, as *Dauid* did. Vnlesse thou be with him to waite vpon him, and serue him; how can he be neere vnto thee, to preserue and comfort thee in all thy necessities?

Hee is neere vnto all; *illum tamen fouet qui appropinquat sibi*: but he comforts and nourisheth such as come neere vnto him. He that hides
him-

himselfe from the light of the Sunne, and closeth the dore and window of his house, that it shine not vnto him; what maruell hee haue no comfort by the light thereof? *In tenebris ambulat; & in omnium luce ipse sibi est causa cecitatis:* He walkes in darkenesse; and in the midst of light shining vnto all, hee becommeth a cause of blindenesse vnto himselfe. If by iniquity wee depart from the Lord, wee may finde him neere as a Iudge to punish vs; not as a Father to protect vs.

For all thy Commaundements are true.] His meaning is: Albeit, O Lorde, the euill will of wicked men follow me, because I follow thee; yet I knowe thy commaundements are true, and that it is not possible thou canst desert or faile thy seruants, who stand to the maintenance of thy word. Then ye see *Dauids* comfort in trouble, was not in any presumptuous conceit of his owne wisdom or strength; but in the truth of Gods promises, which he was perswaded could not faile him.

And heere also hee makes a secret opposition betweene the word of the Lord, and the word of his enemies. Sometime men command, but without reason: sometime they promise, but without performance: sometime they threaten, but without effect. *Herods* commanding, *Rabsache* his rayling, *Iezabel* her proude boasting against *Elijah*, may proue this. But as to the Lord our God, he is

They that in affection goe farre from the Lord hurt themselves.



The word is a staffe, to sustaine vs in trouble.

Man commands without reason, he promises without performance, he threateth without effect, not so the Lord.

always better then his word, and his seruants shall finde more in his performance hereafter then now they can perceiue in his promise: like as his enemies shall finde more weight in his iudgements, then now they can apprehend in his threatnings.

VER. 152. *I haue knowne long since by thy Testimonies, that thou hast established them for ever.*

Experience of
the truth of
Gods word
doth greatly
comfort vs.

THat which he hath spoken concerning the certaine truth of Gods word, he now amplifies it, that he had found it by experience. Sure it is, the Word of God doth euer comfort them who beleue it: but when by experience in their particular troubles, and tentations, they finde the truth of it, then doth it so much the more confirme them. Let vs looke to our selues, and marke narrowly the working of GOD with vs; that as we beleue Gods word to be a most true word in it selfe, so in our owne experience we may finde it toward vs.

The Word an
Anchor of the
soule.

This stabilitie & vchangeable truth of Gods word, if wee once bee perswaded of it, shall be an Anchor to our soules, to holde vs fast that wee bee not carried away with the winde and waues of greatest temptations. Long before *Dauids* trouble came, this was settled as a truth

truth in the heart of *Dauid*; and therefore in all trouble it sustained him. There fall out oftentimes such confusions and perturbations in the world, as makes the children of God to doubt whether the hand of God, by the stable order of his providence, rule them, or not: and where they are moued to doubt; what maruell if Infidels, Epicures, and other Naturalists doe altogether distrust it? After the opinion of that Ethniquè; *Rex mundi magna curat. parua fortuna relinquit.* But it is farre otherwise: his prouident and ruling hand extends to smallest things; *Vide-te quia minima non contemnit Deus: nam si contemneret, non crearet:* For if he neglect them, he would not haue created them. Neyther doth any thing fall out by fortune: but, as saith the Apostle, *He worketh all things after the counsell and good pleasure of his will.* Alway to confirme vs against this tentation, let vs resolue with *Dauid* here, That God hath established his testimonies for euer. More of this see ver. 142. 160.

The prouidence of God by stable order ruleth all things.



Eurip.

Aug. in Matth.

Ephes. 1.



R E S H.

VER. 153. *Behold mine affliction, and deliver me: for I haue not forgotten thy Lawe.*

Dauids prayers
proper to eue-
ry member of
the Church.



Hese prayers of *Dauid* are penned with such heauenly wisdom, that they are conuenient for the state of the whole Church, and euery member thereof. The Church is the bush that burneth with fire, but cannot be consumed: euery member thereof beareth a part of the crosse of Christ; neuer without some affliction, for which they haue need here to pray with *Dauid*, *Behold mine affliction.*

How God is a
spectator and
partaker with
vs in all our af-
flictions.



We know, that in afflictions it is some comfort to vs, to haue our crosses knowne to such, as of whom we are assured that they loue vs: it mitigates our dolour, when they mourne with vs; albeit they be not able to helpe vs. But the Christian hath a more solid comfort; to wit, that in all his troubles the Lord beholds him: like a King, reioicing to see his own seruant wrestle with the enemy; he lookes with a mercifull eye, pitying the infirmities of his owne, when he sees it; and with

with a powerfull hand, ready to helpe them. But because many a time the cloude of our corruption cometh betweene the Lorde and vs, and lets vs not see his helping hand, nor his louing face looking vpon vs; we haue neede to pray at such times with *Dauid*, *Behold mine affliction.*

For I haue not forgotten.] This reason is not, *quod iactare se cuperet, sed ut Dei in se gratiam pronocaret*; as if *Dauid* here did boast of himselfe: for he saith not, that he had fulfilled Gods lawe; but, that he had not forgot it. But this is subioyned, to moue the Lord to pitie and compassion toward him; from this reason, That his conscience was good toward God; if not in that which he had don, yet at least, in that which he would haue done: for he euer protests that it was his ioy to doe the will of the Lord his God. And it is onely this good conscience that dare make request vnto God; where the euill conscience dare not look to him, more then a wounded eye can looke to the light; yea, it flies and runnes away from God: as we see in *Adam*, fearing euill from him, because it had done euill against him; and farre lesse dare it seeke good things from him.

A good conscience makes a man familiar with God.

VER. 154. *Pleade my cause and deliuer me:
quicken me according to thy word.*

An appellation
from men to
God.

HEere is an appellation made by *Dauid* from men vnto God. The meaning of it is: O Lorde, I finde that among men equity is not regarded: euen they, who vpon earth are thy Deputies, who should maintaine the right, and punish the wrong; by them the cause of innocent men many a time is borne downe: wherefore Lord, I beseech thee (who art the righteous Iudge of the world) pleade my cause against them.

To be used of
them who are
wronged by
men.

Wherein, first wee haue a comfort for them who are oppressed by the vnrighteousnesse of men: they are taught here by *Dauid*s example, to appeale to God, and call him to be Iudge betweene them and their oppressors. Many a time good men faint & fall down euen in a good cause for a while, because they trust in their cause, neglecting to seeke the Lords protection.

A warning to
Iudges.

2.Chron. 19.



And againe, here is a warning for all men in the world; specially for Iudges, to whom belongs the cognition of other mens causes: that they take heede what they doe; seeing as *Iehosaphat* said to his Deputies, *The iudgement is the Lords*: for when they haue iudged, the Lord will iudge them ouer againe, & their iudgement also; either to ratifie or disannull the sentence they haue giuen.

uen. And therefore it were good for them, not so much to look vnto such as are vnder them, with whom they may do (as they think) in the matter of right and wrong at their pleasure, without controlement; as to look vnto him who is aboue them, & whose iudgement they themselues must vndergo, both in their persons and actions.

Quicken me. See ver. 25. 37. 40. 50. 88. 93. 107. 154. 156.

VER. 155. *Saluation is farre from the wicked, because they seeke not thy Statutes.*

THis Verse contains a protestation of the miserable condition of the wicked; expressed in this weighty sentence, *Saluation is farre from the wicked. ipsi sunt authores sui periculi, quia Domino non appropinquant*; they themselues are the authors of their own wracke, because they drawe not neere vnto the Lord. *Salute quæ abs te est, se ipsi qui inique viuunt, priuarunt*; they who liue wickedly, deprive themselues of that saluation which is in thee: *Non refugit eos salus; sed ipsi salutem fugiunt*, saluation flies not from them, it is offered vnto them; but they flie from it. A fearful estate, not only to want saluation; but to want it in thy owne default, because thou wilt not embrace it.

In the verse 150. he said that the wicked were farre

Wicked men
are the authors
of their owne
wracke.
Amb. in Psalm.
119.

Basili in Ps. 119.

The word of
God and his
saluation are
conioyned to-
gether.

farre from Gods lawe : now he saith that Gods saluation is as farre from them. The Lord hath conioyned these two, his Word and Saluation : for by his Word hee saueth such as are to be saued : they who despise the one, shall neuer finde the other. If wicked men knew this, or could apprehend it, they would not redeeme the pleasures of sinne so deereley, as for them to defraude their owne soules of saluation; despising against themselves the counsell of God.

Externall pro-
sperity of wic-
ked men not to
be regarded.

And this Oracle of God should confirme vs against all these tentations, which arise vnto vs by looking to the prosperity, peace, and worldly pompe of the wicked. What is the glory of their outward state to be regarded, so long as this fearful sentence lies vpon them, that the saluation of God is farre from them? This sustained the Apostle *S. Paul*, when he saw the great pompe of *Agrippa*; he would not for all that, exchange estates with him : he wished not to be like vnto *Agrippa*; but rather that hee had beene such as he was.

Acts 16.

The godly
guilty of trans-
gression, but
not of contēpt.

Because they seeke not thy Statutes.] Heere is noted the cause of all their misery; namely, the contempt of Gods word : they did not so much as seeke the Lords Statutes; An argument they esteemed nothing of it: for who will seeke that whereof they account not? or who will despise that which they esteeme pretious, and necessary to them? This is much more, then if he had only said, They transgresse thy Statutes. The children
of

of God may be guilty of the one transgression: for in many things we sinne all; *And if any man say he sinnes not, he is a liar, and the truth is not in him:* but they are farre from the other, to disesteeme of Gods word, and cast off all care to seeke it.

VER. 15 6. *Great are thy tender mercies, O Lord: quicken me according to thy iudgements.*

NOW *Dauid* turns his consideration from wicked men, vnto himselfe; acknowledging, that he was no better by nature then they; but that Gods his mercy had made a difference between him and them, where there was none by nature. And therefore prayes he that the work of Gods mercy may be continued with him, to quicken him, and giue him life; that he defile not his conscience by dead workes, as they doe; nor yet haue fellowship with them, in their vnfruitfull workes of darkenesse; but that being quickned by God, he may liue the life of God, from which he saw them to be strangers.

Thus we see, that how-euer the godly exercise sometime their consideration about other things, yet in the end they returne still to themselves: What-euer they heare, or see, or speake of others; they enter into their owne hearts, and edifie themselves by it: if they looke to such as are godly;

It is grace only by which one man differs from another in godliness.

Godly men edifie their hearts by euery thing they see in others.

In Gods mer-
cy, not in our
merit stands
our comfort.

Ambrose.

godly, they are confirmed to follow them: if they looke to the manners of wicked men, they are afraid of their owne weakenesse, & runne to Gods mercy; praying him who hath preserved them from the like impiety, and praying also for grace to keep them, that their harts incline not to walk with them. Thus of every thing they reape some profit to themselves: but naturall men look so to things which are without them, that they enter not into their owne hearts, to edifie themselves by that which they heare or see in others.

Again, the manner of the children of God in their prayers, is, to flie alway to Gods mercy: it is of mercy, that they begin well; of mercy, that they continue well; of mercy, that they looke for any good at the hands of God: let them leane to merits who will; we wil depend vpon mercy. Are we able to giue vnto God himselfe? Are we able to requite his benefites which we haue gotten?

Quis potest debitum referre natura, debitum salutis & gratia? Can any man requite him for benefits of nature which we haue receiued? farre lesse for benefites of grace & saluation: these are debts which wee are neuer able to pay; Where then are thy merits? *Quis nostrum sine diuina potest miseratione subsistere?* Who among vs all can subsist without diuine miseration? *Quid possumus dignū facere premijs cælestibus?* Or what can we do worthy of a heavenly reward? Let vs therfore learn at *Dauid*, to send vp our requests;

Non

Non secundum merita nostra, sed misericordiam Dei: not according to our merits, but his mercies.

Two Epithets he ascribes to Gods mercies: first he calls them great, and then he calls them tender mercies. They are great in many respects: for continuance, they endure for ever: for largenes, they reach vnto the heauens, & are higher then they; yea, they are aboue all the workes of God. And this is for the comfort of poore sinners, whose sinnes are many and great: let them not despaire; his mercies are greater and more: for sith they are greater then all his works; how much more greater then thou and all thy sinfull workes? All the Nations of the earth are but like the droppe of a bucket, or as a graine of sand, compared with his Maiestie: what art thou then, that thou shouldst magnifie thy deedes aboue his rich mercie; as if thy sinnes were so great, that his mercie could not compasse them? Onely doe not abuse his mercy; neyther turne thou his grace into wantonnesse: but if thou vnfeinedly repent, then doe thou also stedfastly belecue, that thy sinnes, were they neuer so great, shall easily be swallowed vp by his infinite mercies. As the Ocean, when it flowes, couers sands and rockes, and all, that they are not seene: so, where the floud of Gods compassions breaks out, how easily doth it overflow and couer all thy transgressions? This is the meditation of the Apostle; that where before he had beene many manner of wayes sinfull and ignorant,

The mercies of God, why they are called great.

Esa. 40.
Comfort against the greatness of our sinnes.



1. Tim. 1.

ignorant, a blasphemor, an oppressor, a persecuter; yet the grace of our Lord had bene exceeding abundant toward him: where sinne had abounded, grace had superabounded, to ouerflow and couer it. And in this he stands for an example to all that will belecue, that they should neuer distrust Gods great mercies for the greatnesse of their finnes.

The mercies of
God are called
tender, & why.

Iam. 3.



Life of grace
should be che-
rished continu-
ally.

The other Epithet he giues them, is, That they are tender mercies; becaule the Lord is easie to be intreated: for he is slowe vnto wrath, but ready to shew mercy. *S. Iames* saith, that the wildom which is from aboue is gentle, peaceable, easie to be intreated. If his grace in his children make them gentle, and easie to be intreated; what shall we thinke of him selfe? Such he will haue such pitie in vs poore creatures, that seauenty times seauen times in the day hee will haue vs to forgiue the offences of our brethren; O what pitie & compassion abounds in him selfe! Thus we see our comfort is increased: that as his mercies are great, so are they tender; easily obtained, where they are earnestly craued.

Quicken me.] *David* found the life of grace in him selfe continually hindred, impugned, yea, oft-times fore weakened, by the power of his corrupt nature: and therefore the more frequent is he in this petition, that God would quicken him.

Ver.

VER. 157. *My persecuters; and my oppressors are many: yet doe I not swerue from thy testimonies.*

A New protestation of his constancy vnder affliction: that albeit he was persecuted and sore oppressed for his profession; yet no trouble could make him swerue from the testimonies of God. Trouble is the best tryall of true Religion. *Non est magnum si tunc a De testimonij non declines, cum te nullas persequitur;* It is no great thing to cleave vnto the testimonies of God, when none pursues thee for it: when authority allowes it, when honour and prosperitie follows it; it is no great praise then to professe it. When the Lord gloried of his seruant *Iob*, that he was an vpright man, fearing God, &c. Satan replied; And what maruell? Doth *Iob* worship God for nothing? He knew there were many hyrelings, & temporizers in the world, that worshipped not God sincerely; and therefore would not continue in it. He thought *Iob* to be one of these: Lay now thine hand vpon all that he hath, and he shal blaspheme thee to thy face. But he was deceived: for the more he was crost, the neerer did he cleave vnto the Lord. Let vs remember, as *S. Paul* hath warned vs; *We haue not yet resisted vnto the blood:* neither yet that w^{ch} *S. Peter* calls *The fiery tryall haue we endured.* And yet what a shame

is

Constancy in Religion.

Trouble a tryall of true Religion.

Iob 1.

Such as are not sincere worshippers will not continue.



Manifold were
Dauids troubles.

There is one
persecuter of
the godly, Sa-
tan; but he
hath many in-
struments.

Corrupt affe-
ctions fore per-
secutors.
1. Cor. 6.



is it to see how many moued by the naked ex-
ample of the Apostles are becom colder in Reli-
gion? An euident argument, that they were neuer
truely religious: for if they cannot stand against
offences, how should they stand against oppres-
sions and persecutions?

What persecuters they were, and what was the
kinde of persecution, *Dauid* expresseth not. *Basil*
thinke, *Quod quacunq; sibi acciderant, omnia*
hoc Psalmo congesit; that what-euer befell him
of any trouble, eyther by *Saul* or *Abalom*, or
vncircumcised Nations, among whom he sojour-
ned; all is gathered together in this Psalme:
which containes, eyther prayers he made when
he was in trouble; or prayles he gaue when God
deliuered him out of trouble; or else spirituall
gloriation of that strength & constancy, which
God gaue him to indure it.

Properly there is but one persecuter of all the
godly: this is Satan, the enemy of Gods glorie
& of our saluation. *Vnus persequutor est: sed mul-
tos habet ministros*: but he hath many seruants &
instruments vnder him; some inuisible, some vi-
sible: and according as they are, so is the kinde
of persecution eyther bodily or spirituall. There
is an euill spirit of fornication, another of auarice,
another of pride; *Hi sunt persequutores graues*:
these are fearefull persecutors. Otherwise, the
Apostle would not say, *Flie fornication*, if the
spirit of fornication were not a pursuer. Many
are

are stout in the outward persecution, *qui occulta hac persecutione ceciderunt*, who by this secret persecution haue beene ouercome: *Hi tibi hostes cauendi, hi grauiores tyranni per quos Adam captus*; these are the enemies whō thou must eschew: these are the most grieuous tyrannes by whom *Adam* was captiued; and thou art to beware of them.

By visible enemies also Satan fights against vs: but these are not so dangerous as the other; yet for the present, more displeasānt: let vs not bee discouraged with them; *Si multa persecutiones, multa et probationes*. If our persecutions bee many; so are our trialls and probations: tryals, I meane both of our sinceritie, and of the truth of God. If *Daniel* had not by wicked men beene cast into the denne of Lyons; and the three children by *Nebuchadnezzars* fury, into the fiery furnace: then should not their constant affection towarde God, and his truth & power in preserving them, haue beene so clearly manifested. *Tibi ergo prodest quod multi persecutores sunt, ut inter multas persecutiones facilius inuenias quemodo coroneris*: The more waies thou be persecuted, the more wayes hast thou to bee crowned: for by many tribulations, doe wee enter into the kingdom of heauen.

By visible enemies also he persecutes vs.



VER. 158. *I saw the transgressours; and was grieved, because they did not keep thy word.*

The godly
esteem more
of Gods glory,
then their owne
liues.

Albeit his trouble were great, by the restless malice of his enemies; and his dangers oftentimes desperate: yet he protests none of these went so nere his heart, as the dishonour of God, and contempt of Gods word. The glory of God, shining in his word, is dearer to the godly then their liues: and they haue no pleasure to liue, but melt away for griefe, when they see wickednes and idolatry exalted, pietie and true religion trode vnder foot. This made good *Elish* desire that the Lord would take him out of this life: this made *Dauid* pine away for griefe. And it may condemne many, who if so be their owne estate be peaceable, they will not disquiet themselves with griefe, for any dishonour that by impiety of wicked men is done vnto God. See ver. 136.

VER. 159. *Consider O Lord, how I loue thy precepts: quicken me according to thy louing kindnes.*

A good thing,
that a man can
desire God to
look vpon him.

THis verse contains a protestation of his great loue toward the word of God: for probation whereof hee appeales to the testimony of God; desiring the Lord to consider

if

if it be so or not. It is an argument of a good conscience, when a man dare present his heart unto God, and desire him to looke into it. *Nemo dicit vide, nisi qui indicat se si videatur esse placitum*: No man saith to God, Looke vpon me; but he who knowes that God will like him, when hee lookes vpon him: for hee that doth euill, hates the light; and an euill conscience, dares not stand before God: but hides the selfe so farre, as it can from him, as we see in *Adam*.

But sith so it is that the knowledge of our estate cannot be hid from the Lord, but wee must be presented naked before him; it is but vanity now to hide our wayes from him. *Woe be vnto them that seeke in deepe, to hide their counsell from the Lord: their waies are in secret, and they say who seeth them.* But *He that made the cie, shall hee not see?* Wisdome rather craues that wee should lay open our hearts to the Lord in time; walking so in a good conscience before him, that we might be bold to say with *Dauid*, *Looke vpon mee, Lord, and consider me.*

How I loue.] He saith not, consider how I performe thy precepts; but how I loue them. The comfort of a Christian militant, in this body of sin, is rather in sinceritie and seruencie of his affections, then in the absolute perfection of his actions. He failes many times, in his obedience to Gods precepts, in regard of his action; but loue in his affection still remains: so that both before

Ambrosi,
Psal. 119.

Vanity, to hide
our way from
the Lord.

Loue of Gods
word in the
godly is inui-
cible.

Not only Gods
promises, but
his precepts al-
so are loued of
the godly.

Rom. 7. 8

Worldly things
sought earnest-
ly by world-
lie men.

the temptation to sin, and after it, there is a griefe in his soule, that hee should finde in himselfe any corrupt will or desire, contrary to the holy will of the Lord his God: and this proues an inuincible loue in him to the precepts of God.

Thy precepts.] He saith not that he loued Gods promises onely: for euery man hath a liking of these; but his precepts also. Naturally, men hate the precepts and commandements of Gods law; they are so contrary to the disposition of his corrupt nature, that as the Apostle affirms, sinne takes occasion by the commandement, to worke in man all manner of concupiscence: for without the law, sinne is dead; and man his corrupt nature, is the more bent vnto euill, the more it bee forbiddē: but grace comming in to renew nature, it works a loue euen of the commandements of God; as being most holy in themselves, most profitable for vs, and that our felicity stands in a conformity with them.

Quicken mee.] Of this petition, See verse 25. 37. 40. And out of *Dauid* his earnest & frequent repetition of this petition, let vs learne how spirituall things are to bee sought with a seruent affection. It is pittie to see that the things of this world are sought so incessantly, as if they were hardly obtained; or being obtained were able to fulfil all our necessities, or yet could continue and abide stil with vs: whereas things pertaining to the life to come, are sought in so cold a manner, as if it were

were nothing to get them; or being gotten, they could doe vs little good; or at least were not to continue with vs. Oh that we could rectifie our desires in this point; and learne to seeke most excellent things, with our best and most excellent affections; and that we could alway remember these three things: first, it is vncertaine, if we shall obaine worldly things when wee seeke them: next, granting we do, it is most certain that they will not fulfill our necessaries: and thirdly, albeit they were able so to doe, yet can they not continue with vs. Let vs therefore make choise, as *Mary* did, of the best part; and couer, as the Apostle counsels vs, those gifts which are most excellent.

May make vs
ashamed that
cannot seeke ex-
cellent things
with an excel-
lent affection.

VER. 160. *The beginning of thy word is truth: and all the iudgements of thy righteousness indure for ever.*

HEere is a commendation of Gods word, from the truth and righteousness thereof. Some reade the words so, as if *Dauid* should say; the word of God hath beene true & *principio*, from the very beginning of the world. Some reade this way, *Ab ipso limine veritas tua conspicua est in verbo tuo*, in the very entry of thy word, thy truth is manifest: and some, *Caput verbi tui veritas*, this is the excellencie and great

Perswasion of
the truth of
Gods word
brings out o-
bedience.

Psalm.

2. Pet. 1. 19

The iudgement by-gon
should warne
the wicked of
iudgements to
come.

Every man
feares when
iudgement
comes.

pretogative of thy word, the very head and garland of it is verity. This perswasion is the mother of all obedience to the word of God; and it begets also such a comfort in our souls, as no trouble nor temptation is able to overcome. Saint *Peter* calles the word of God, *a most sure word*. And the Lord himselfe, calles the promises thereof, *The sure mercies of Dauids house*: Wee may say with the Apostle, *We know whom we haue beleened*. The Lord will not faile his people: according to his word so shall it be vnto vs.

And all the iudgements.] Here *Dauid* shewes what sustained him, against the delay of iudgement vpon wicked men; to weet, a meditation of the eternall righteousness of Gods iudgements: He considered with himselfe, that the righteousness of God, was not for one age, but for all; neither yet for one sinne only, but for all: & then looking to by-gone iudgements executed vpon the wicked; he collects, that albeit for the present they were spared, yet at length they would be punished, seeing Gods iudgements are euerm-lasting. And this should serue for a warning to wicked men of this age; that the Lord who hath punished the wickednes of other ages before, will not let the impiety of this age escape unpunished.

When the iudgements of God are executed, then all men acknowledge, Verely, *There is a God that iudgeth righteously in the earth*. Yea, faithlesse men are amazed when hee strikes, and forced

forced to confesse that it is his hand: but before
the iudgement come, to bellenue that it will come,
is an argument of true faith. So *Noah* ~~moored~~
with reuerence prepared the Arke. And *Salomon*
saith, *A prudent man sees the plague before it*
come, and hides himselfe in time. God giue vs
this wisedomc.

Onely godly
men feare, be-
fore it come.
Heb. 11

24

SHIN.



SHIN.

VER. 161. *Princes haue persecuted me without cause: but mine heart stood in awe of thy words.*

Euery example
of godlie men
learnes vs some
lesson.



T hath pleased the Lord to teach vs, not only by his word; but by the examples of others his seruants, who liued before vs. For this cause, hath hee re-gifted the obedience of *Noah*, the faith of *Abraham*, the patience of *Iob*, the meekenes of *Moses*, the zeale of *Dauid*; that we also should be zealous of those graces, for which they receiued so honourable a commendation of God.

How *Dauid*
saith he was
persecuted
without cause.

It is a great patience, to sustaine iniurie from any wicked man: but the greater the person be that persecutes vs, the greater is the temptation; whereof see verse 23. Onely now it comes to be enquired; How can *Dauid* say that he was persecuted without cause? seeing in all troubles which can befall vs, if wee rightly examine our consciences, we shall still finde within our selues causes, which haue deserued sharper corrections.

1. The answer is, that *Dauid* here is not comparing himselfe with God: for hee knew that in

He compares
not himselfe
with God, but
with men.

Gods

Gods sight no man could be iustified; and none can say vnto him, thou hast striken me without a fault: but here he compares himselfe with men, to whom hee had giuen no iust cause of offence. It is true, *Saul* pretended great causes against *Dauid*; that hee was an enemy both to his life and crowne: but *Dauid* not only by his words doth purge himselfe, but by his deeds declare the contrary. For when hee might haue slaine him, hee spared him both in the cave, and in the campe. Thus we must also distinguish betweene causes pretended by euill men, and those which are indeede.

But mine heart stood in awe of thy word.] *Dauid* renders not euill for euill; but ouercomes euill with good. Though Princes who should bee fathers and protectors of people, should degenerate into oppressors and persecuters; Is it lawfull for that, to shake off obedience; to refuse their tribute, or to murder their persons? Shall we become godles Atheists, because they are become faithles tyrants? No, no: we see men truly religious, doe practise no such vnrighteousnes. This may tell vs from what spirit proceeds the Romish doctrine, which not only permits, but commands the deposition of Kings, the loosing of subjects from their obedience: yea, the murdering of their persons. It cannot be from that good spirit wherewith *Dauid* was inspired: Princes persecuted him, and he might haue slaine them;

Princes, suppose they were wicked, yet should they be reuerenced.



Murder of Kings is from the spirit of Satan.

1. Sam. 24

The feare of
Gods wrath o-
uercomes the
feare of man
his displeasure.

Psal. 2

The awe-band
of wicked men
is without
them.

as his seruants counsell'd him to murder *Saul*. God, saide they, haue closed thine enemy, into thine hand : but he would not, for his heart stood in awe of Gods word ; which told him , as there he answered his men, that it was not lawfull for him to touch the Lords anointed.

Againe, we see heere an example of the constancy of Gods children : no winde of temptation can remoue, far lesse ouer-turne them ; they are like rocks in the sea, induring euery waue ; like trees planted by the riuier side ; Gods owne plantation : they may be shaken, but not ouerturned ; they abide rooted and stablished by the Lord. The angry countenance of Princes, is very awe-full vnto men : but *Dauid* heere shewes, what sustained him against them ; to weet, the awe of God : so *Moses* feared not *Pharaoh*, because he had seene him who is inuisible. A greater feare ouercomes the lesse ; hee who knowes the power of Gods wrath, will not cast himself in danger thereof, for no wrath of man. And hereof proceedeth that inuincible courage of Martyrs ; who, by no terrour of most strange and vncouth torments that the wit of man could deuise, could euer bee induced to deny the Lord Iesus, because they stood in awe of his word.

Besides this, wee see that both good and euill men, haue their owne awe-bands : but, the awe-band of an euil man is without him, in the countenance of man, that may controule and punish him,

him: it this restraine him not, he stands in no awe of the Lord. This was *Abners* reason, why hee would not slay *Azazel*; How shall I holde vp my face to my brother *Isab*? where he should rather haue saide, How shall I holde vp my face to the Lord my God?

But the awe-band of a godly man is within him. Albeit no man were to see him, nor punish him, and he might doe wickedly vncontrolled of man; yet the reuerence of God restraines him. For he walks as the Apostle saith, in simplicity & in *ἐπιεικειᾳ* *Dei*, that is, in such godly perspicuie as might be discerned in the sunne. *Nec tam pudenda apud eum publicatio, flagitium quam conscientia est*: neither thinkes he such shame of the publication of his cryme, as of his euill conscience. *Da Gygis annulum sapienti, ut beneficio eius latere possit cum deliquerit; non minus fugiet peccatorum contagium, quā si non possit latere*: Giue, saith he, to a wise man, the ring of *Gyges*, by the benefit whereof he may lurke, when hee doth euill; yet will he not thelesse flie the affection of sinne, then if he could not lurke at all. *Non enim latebra sapienti spes impunitatis, sed innocentia est*: for the defence of a wise man against publike shame, is not in the hope of impunity, but in innocencie. And heerein stands the tryall of a man truly religious, from an hypocrite.

The awe-band
of godly men
is within them.



Ambrose,
Psal. 119.

With what affection Gods word should be received.



Why naturall men esteeme not of Gods word.

VER. 162. *I reioyced at thy word; as one that findeth a great spoile.*

THe word of God renders such manifold fruit to the godly, that by no comparison can they expresse it: and therefore *David* changes so many similitudes. The Apostle calls it λογος αποστολης αποδοχης αξιου, a word worthy of all acception; because look with what affection, men receiue any thing in the world, that is most pleasant or profitable for them, with the like affection should men receiue the word of God. A man that is hungry, how blythe is he when meate is offered him? a man very thirsty deuoureth drinke when it is giuen; a sick man or sore pined, greedily imbraces soueraine medicine that he knowes will cure him; a poore man when he findes a treasure, with a ioyfull heart receiues it. How did that lame man leap and exult for ioy, when hee found that *Peter* had restored his feet vnto him? After the same manner should poor miserable sinners receiue the word of God: it is meate to feede them, it is drinke to refresh them, it is light to illuminate them, it is life to quicken them. But alas, where men finde not their wants, no maruaile they finde not the comfort which the word offers. Let be they cannot receiue it with all reception, they receiue it not at their eares, they delight not to heare it: but

but good *David* contents not himselfe to declare how it was sweeter to him then hony, more precious to him then treasures of gold; but now also he tels how his ioy by it, exceeds the ioy of men victorious in battell, returning with the spoile: which how great a ioy it is, see *Esay* 9. Many great victories had he had he gotten by the sword: but now finding that by the armour of Gods word, he had gotten patience and strength, to ouercome all the malice of his enemies; hee protests here, it rendred to him a more excellent ioy, then any that could be expressed.

And this ioy, which Gods children finde by the word, ariseth from the glad tidings which it brings vnto them. When the Lord *Iesus* saide to *Zachews*, *This day saluation is come to thine house*; when he said to the man sicke of the palsie, *Thy sinnes are forgiven thee*; and again, to the diseased woman, *Thy faith hath made thee whole*; how could they but exult for ioy to heare it? What then he spake to them out of his owne blessed mouth, he daily speakes to the like of them (that is, to such as belieue and repent, out of his holy oracle) that their sinnes are forgiven; that they are the sonnes of *Abraham*: yea, the sonnes of God, to whom belongs saluation. This renders to them a ioy, which surmounts all that comfort the world is able to giue.

It is far otherwise with the wicked. As *Achab* (spake of *Micah*, *He neuer prophesieth good vnto mee*

The godly find
ioyfull tydings
by the word,
and therefore e-
steeme of it.

But the wicked
finde it a mes-
sage of their
damnation.

What maruile
then they hke
it not?

nee: So finde they that the word of God, neuer prophesieth any good vnto them; but by the contrary when they heare it, they receiue within themselves a sentence of damnation. What maruile then, they delight not in it; yea, rather count it a wearines, and oftentimes be moued to furie, when they heare it? like those faithles Iewes, who gnashed their teeth, and were like to burst for anger, at the hearing of the gospel, preached by Iesus Christ. Who can expresse their misery, whose euill conscience grieues them to heare the glad tidings of the gospel; and to whom the word of life is no other but a sauour of death?

VER. 163. *I hate falsehood, and abhorre it; but
thy law do I loue.*

Euery thing
contrary to
Gods word is a
falsehood; and
why.

BY falsehood, heere *David* vnderstands euery thing which is not agreeable to the word of God: and so truely it is a deceitfull vanitie; which in the ende will faile and beguile all them, who are delighted with it. And to declare it was not any light hatred of sinne which he had, hee subioynes that hee did abhorre it: which imports not a simple refusall, but a vehement indignation; a hostile hatred, mixed with such a dolour and horror, as vseth to be in the hearts of men, when any horrible or hurtfull thing is offered to them.

Colde

Colde hatred of euill, by proceſſe of time, turnes to a liking of euill, that wee begin in ſome reſpects to thinke it tolerable; and ſo at length are intangled in the ſnare thereof. No man at the firſt commeth to the worſt: if we haue not ſlip at the end of the ſtaffe to count it for our enemy, it will eaſily creepe in acquaintance with our affection. Of this it commeth to paſſe, as wee lee in daily experience, that where men once fall away from their firſt loue, and becom luke warme; profeſſing a truth, but not louing it zealouſly; miſliking vntruth, but not abhorring it: they eaſily degenerate into Apoſtates. And therefore our affections would euer bee kept in a right temperature by continuall exerciſes of the word and prayer.

In the law, God commanded his people to hate all vnclanneſſe, euen in their bodies: hee that touched a dead body or any vnclane thing, was vnclane himſelfe. This had in it not onely a truth (for honeſtie and comelines become the ſaints of God) but a ſignification alſo, *Immunditia iuſtis iniquitas eſt*, To holy men all iniquity is vnclanneſſe. *Quid autem immundius, quam mentem, qua nihil homini datum eſt pretioſius, turpibus commaculare criminibus?* And what greater vnclanneſſe, then to defile the mind, the moſt precious thing which God hath giuen man, with filthy finnes? Theſe are not onely polluted in themſelues; but defile others that come neere them.

Col: hatred of euill ſhortly turnes into a liking of euill.



Bodily vnclannes vnſeemely for Gods people.

Ambroſe.

Much more ſpiritual vnclannes.

He that hateth
sinne must loue
Gods law.

them. *Fuge ergo iniustitiam, quæ uiuentes adhuc mortuos facit*; Flie therefore, with *Dauid*, all yn-righteousnes, which makes liuing men to bee dead; and to become more hurtfull and horrible to others by their life, then they can be by their death.

But thy law.] No man can serue two masters, of contrary wills, and dispositions: if he loue the one, he must hate the other. *Ye that loue the Lord, hate that which is euill.* Men now boast much of their loue to God: but the best rule to try it, is the contrarie hatred of all euill. See verse 113. 128.

VER. 164. *Seuen times a day doe I praise thee, because of thy righteous iudgements.*

Affections, if
they be strong
cannot lunge,
but will breake
forth in actions.

Affections of the soule cannot long bee kept secret: if they bee strong, they will breake forth in actions. The loue of God is like a fire in the heart of man; which breakes forth, and manifests it selfe, in the obedience of his commandements, and praising him for his benefits: and this is it which *Dauid* now protests, that the loue of God was not idle in his heart, but made him seruent and earnest in praising God; so that seauen times a day he did praise God. *Numerum studium sanctæ deuotionis exprimitur.* For by this number, the carefulnes of holy deuotion is

Ambrosi.

is expressed, and the seruency of his loue; that in praying God he could not be satisfied, sayth *Basil.*

Concerning this duety of the praying of God, and time, which is the greatest worldly benefit God giues man; see ver. 62.

Onely let *Dauids* example prouoke vs to the imitation of the like deuotion and pietie: and let vs be ashamed of our negligence in this dueties; who scarce can doe that on the Sabbath day, which *Dauid* did euery day.

Vnder the Lawe, the Lord commaunded that the daily sacrifice, which euery day morning and euening was offered, should be doubled on the Sabbath. But alas! the prophanenesse of this age is such, that not onely now is the daily sacrifice neglected; but the Sabbath contemned of many, who neyther prayse him for his workes of creation, remembring they are his creatures; nor yet for the workes of redemption, as if they were no Christians redeemed by Christs blood: and so least praise giue they to the Lorde vpon that day, wherein they are bound to giue him most. A fearfull ingratitude. God grant *Dauids* example may learne vs, in this point, to be more dutifull.

Such is our coldnesse, that we scarce pray so frequently on the Sabbath as *Dauid* did euery day.

Yet on the Sabbath the daily sacrifice should be doubled.



VER. 165. *They that loue thy lawe shall haue great prosperity; and they shall haue no hurt.*

It is not for
one, but for all
the godly, what
euer comfort is
in Gods word.

Hitherto *David* hath declared his great affection toward the Word of God, and that vnspcakable comfort he found in it. And now lest it might bee thought, that this was by any speciall priuiledge or dispensation of God toward him, from which others are excluded; he now declares that all who loue the law of God, may looke for the like comfort in it, which he had found. And this he sets downe in this proposition; speaking now, not in his owne person, as before, but in the person of others. Wherein we haue first to consider a description of Gods children; and next, the priuiledge or benefites belonging to them.

Godly men
many wayes
described in
holy Scripture,
and why.

The description of the godly is heere, *They that loue thy lawe.* Many manner of wayes are the children of God described in holy Scripture; as, from their faith in God, from their loue, from their feare, from their obedience, from their patience: to declare it is not one, but manifolde graces of the spirit, which concurre to make vp a Christian; and how they ail goe together, like the linkes of a chaine, that one drawes on all the rest. His faith is not without loue: his loue is not without obedience: his obedience is not without feare: his feare is not without hope: his hope



hope is not without patience : his patience is not without prayers; which keepes and conserues all the rest. And hercof it comes that the godly in holy Scripture are so many waies described.

But among all the graces of the Spirit, the godly are most frequently described from their loue: and therefore of all other we should most take heed that the grace of loue be in vs; for two causes: first, because it leades vs to the surest knowledge of Gods affection toward our selues; and next, it giues vs the surest notice of that estate, and disposition, wherein wee stand our selues.

As to the first, the grace of seruent and vnfeyned loue, if it be in vs, makes vs certainly to know that we are beloued of God. So saith the Apostle, *Herein is loue; not that wee loued God first: but that he loued vs.* If we know him, it is because we haue bene knowne of him. If a man vtter not his voyce, the Eccho makes him no answer: if he looke not into a glasse, it makes no representation of his face: if the Lord had not called vs, we should neuer haue answered him: if he had not sought vs, wee should neuer haue sought him; neyther loued him, if first hee had not loued vs. Here then is the first benefite wee reape by this grace of loue; that by it we knowe the minde of God toward vs to be full of loue. So that now we neede not goe vp to Gods secret counsell, to enquire what is his minde concerning vs: let vs

A 1 2

enter

Yet are they most described by loue, for two causes.

1. Loue in vs leades vs to a true knowledge of Gods affection to vs. 1. Ioh. 4.



A great comfort, to know that God is well minded toward vs.

1. By loue in vs,
we know we
are in the state
of grace.

Two things to
trie if we haue
loue or not.

1. He that loues
God cannot
but loue his
law, fith it is a
poutrait of his
image.

enter into the secret of our owne hearts, and try there what is our affection toward him: if wee dare say that we loue him, then may we be out of all doubt that we are beloued of him.

The other benefit is, that by loue we know we are in the state of grace, translated, as saith the Apostle, from death to life: then we begin to liue when we begin to loue our God. There may be in man a shadow of grace; a profession of faith & obedience: but though a man had all knowledge and eloquence, wanting loue, he is but a sounding Cymbal. So that by this one grace, w^{ch} the Apostle calls a most excellent grace, all other graces of the spirit will come to be tried. That faith which workes not by loue, is no faith: & that obedience w^{ch} flowes not from faith, is no obedience. Loue is the balance of the Sanctuary, wherein euery thing is weighed which is offered vnto God: let vs therefore couet this most excellent grace.

That this comfort may be made the more sure vnto vs, let vs consider these two infallible tokens of our loue: the first is, the loue of Gods law; the next is the loue of his Saints.

The law of God hath in it a certaine pourtraiture of his image. What he is in himselfe, he hath declared in his lawe: & therefore such as knowe him and loue him, cannot but loue his law. *If any man loue me*, said the Lord Iesus, *he will keepe my commandements*. Dauid ioynes these two together in the 16. Psalm; hee protests that God

was

was the portion of his inheritance : and againe in the 111. verse of this Psalm, That he had taken the Testimonies of God as an heritage for euer. Alas, that foolish man should think to disioyne these two; pretending to loue God, when he shewes himselfe a plaine contemner of his word.

The other marke, whereby Gods loue is tryed, is the loue of his Saints: *By this shall yee be knowne to be my Disciples, if yee loue one another. He that loueth not his brother whom he hath seene; how can hee loue God whom hee hath not seene?* Man was made to the image of God: Can he be a loue of God, who loues not man made to the image of God?

Dauid many times hath protested that he loued God dearely; but he proues it by this, That he loued the lawe of God, and the Saints of God: *I am companion* (said hee) *to all them that feare thee*, ver. 63. And againe, *My loue extends not to thee; but for thy sake my delight is in thy Saints, and excellent ones upon earth.*

There are many good Christians, who when they heare that *Marie* washed the feete of our blessed Sauour with her teares, and wiped them with the haire of her head; they doe wish they had the like occasion, that they might shewe the like affection toward him. These would do well to remember, What thou cannot do to himselfe, why wilt thou not doe to such as hee loues, and

Aa 3

hath

2. He that loues
God cannot
but loue his
Saints.
i.oh. 13.
1. ioh. 4.

And now our
affection to-
ward himselfe,
is to be declar-
ed in our af-
fection to his
Saints.

As David in-
treated weake
Mephiboseth
for Ionathans
lake.

So should we
poore weake
Christians for
Christs lake:



The great re-
compence of
godlinesse.

hath recommended to be loued of thee for his lake; accounting that done to himselfe, which is don vnto them? When *Jonathan* was slain in the battell with *Saul*, and *Dauid* came to the Kingdome; how diligent was he to seeke any that did belong to *Jonathan*, to whom hee might shew kindnesse for *Ionathans* lake? at length he found a lame and infirme sonne of *Jonathan*; and for *Ionathans* lake he inerrained him. Very kinde was *Jonathan* to *Dauid*; but not so kinde as Iesus hath beene to vs: and should not we for Iesus lake be kinde to those who belong vnto him? If thou be willing to doe it, and carefull to enquire, Is there none to whome I may shewe fauour, for that fauour Christ shewed to me? in euery place thou shalt still finde some *Mephiboseth*; some poore, some lame and infirme Christian. Why then wilt thou defraude thy selfe of this comfort, that by extending comfort to those which are his, thou declare thy louing affection toward himselfe? considering also, that the smallest benefite giuen to any in his Name, though it were but a cuppe of colde water, shall not want the reward.

Shall haue great prosperitie.] This being spoken of the description of godly men; now followes the priuiledge and benefite heere promised to them: They shall haue great prosperitie; for so by the word of peace, the Hebrewes expresse all manner of good. Godlinesse, saith the

the Apostle, hath the promises both of this life, and of the life to come: euen in their present troubles the godly are comforted with vnspeakeable ioy; or if for the present they feele it not, yet are they borne out with a liuely hope thereof: afflicted on euery side, but neuer forsaken; casten downe, but they perish not.

But our greatest comfort is promised now, not exhibited now: excellent promises are made vnto vs; but sure they are farre inferiour to that which shal be performed. Worldlings haue their heauen vpon earth: they enioy their portion heere; but we looke for a better. *Serua futuris mercedem tuam*; keepe thou thy reward for the time to come. When we shall passe this redde Sea of tribulation, and be possessed in our heauenly Canaan; then shall we know the performance of this promise, *They that loue thy lawe shall haue great prosperitie.*

This he expounds more cleerely in the negative part, when he saies, *They shall haue none hurt*: he meanes not, that they are exempted from all trouble; but indued with this priuiledge, That no trouble can hurt them: for all things worke for the best to them who loue the Lord.

By the contrary, most miserable is the condion of them who hate Gods law: *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.* The prosperity they seeme to haue is their ruine, and their peace like the calmes of the Sea, which incontinent is

Our greatest comfort is promised now, but not exhibited now.

Amb.

The priuiledge of godly men, No trouble can hurt them.

To the wicked prosperity is pernicious.

Their peace
ends in pertur-
bation.



The miserable
estate of wic-
ked men, when
comforts ex-
ternall faile the.

Esa.: 8.

Example here-
of in Nero.

troubled with stormie windes; in such sort, that the waues thereof are dashed one against another; it rageth and foomeeth out the dirt and myre, which is in the bowels thereof. So is it with the wicked: so soone as trouble cometh vpon them, they walter from one perturbation to another, foming out their shame; and at length ende in comfortlesse desperation. Thus before they bee aware, all their mirth and apparant prosperity is concluded, as *Belsafars* banquet was, with a cuppe of Gods wrath.

For their comfort being onely in things externall, and not in the Lord their God; so soone as the one failes them, who can tell the horrible confusion wherein they fall? For want of the other they are casten, as *Esa* saith, in a strait bedde, wherein they can finde no ease nor reliefe: for at one time the earth failes them, and the heauens also are closed vpon them. Such comforts as they had in creatures vpon earth, forsake them: and if they looke to heauen, they finde nothing but the angry countenance of God looking downe vpon them; so was it with *Saul*, *Achitophel*, *Judas*, and with *Nero*.

O what a strait bedde was hee casten into, when the Senate discerned him anemie to Rome? when *Galba* came against him to execute the sentence? when hee shaken with the plague of the heart, and his owne conscience within him did torment him? when the hea-

uens

uens cast downe their countenance vpon him? when the earth, whercupon hee was flying, opened, as hee thought her mouth, to swallow him? when such as hee had murthured, seemed to rise and pursue him? Such shall be the miserable end of all those who loue not the Lord: they shall finde no comfort, who cannot comfort themselues in him.

VER. 166. *Lord I haue trusted in thy saluation, and haue done thy commandements.*

WHat in the former Verse *David* hath spoken in generall of the happy estate of Gods children, hee now applies to himselfe; making heere the assumption of that proposition, But so it is Lord, I loue thy law; which in this Verse, and the Verse following, he amplifies: whereupon the conclusion followes; Therefore let me haue none hurt, but great prosperitie. Of this we learne, that without application we can reape no comfort of the promises of Gods word: for suppose they were neuer so sweete, vnlesse they belong vnto vs; what comfort can we get by them? yea, certaine it is, that vnto an euill conscience, which dare not make the application of them to it selfe, the most comfortable promises are most terrible.

Without application we can reape no comfort of Gods promises.

Yea, most comfortable promises are most terrible to such as dare not apply them.

Faith carries vs
out of our
selues to leane
on the Lord.

Math. 7.

Bern.

Loue proued
by obedience,
and obedience
tryed by loue.

terrible. Let vs so liue, that they may be ours: let vs so heare them, or reade them, that we may apply them to our selues; and then shall we finde comfort in them.

Into thy saluation.] Such is the nature of faith, that it carries vs out of our selues in vnto the Lorde, and makes vs to leane vpon him, rest in him, and liue in him, and to him; and so this phrase imports. They who abide in themselves, resting in any thing that is in them (eyther wisdom, strength, or merit) shall bee found to haue built their house on the Sand; which will not continue: *Periculosa habitatio eorum, qui habitant in meritis.* But such as goe out of themselves, and trust in the Lorde, haue built their house on the Rocke that shall neuer faile them.

VER. 167. *My soule hath kept thy testimonies: for I loue them exceedingly.*

HEE insists still in the assumption; prouing his loue to God by his obedience, and commending his obedience from this, That it flowed from loue: otherwise, though a man should giue all that hee hath to the poore; though hee should subdue his bodie in most seuerer manner; yea, though he gaue his bodie to be burnt in the fire; if these actions flowe not from

from such a loue as is the daughter of faith, they are not acceptable vnto God. And the manner of *Dauids* speech, being more narrowly considered, will let vs see, that his reioicing was rather in the sincerity of his affections, then in the perfection of his actions.

The Apostle saith, that faith workes by loue. What it workes our Sauour tels vs; *He that loueth me, keepeth my commandments*: and *Dauid* againe shewes here, how loue flowing from such faith, is the mother of all dutifull obedience. If we sinne against God, it is for want of loue toward him: and sith his lawe craues nothing but loue, and we are bound by so many obligations to loue him; wee are made most inexcusable, if wee loue him not. Oh that we could consider this! we would account our sinne more weightie then it is. Why sinne we? Because we want the loue of God. And why loue we him not? haue wee any excuse for this? Let vs yet stirre vp our hearts, and endeouour to cherish this little sparkle of Gods loue that is in vs: let vs increase it to a great flame, till it kindle all the powers of our soule vpward, toward our God. Oh that it were so.

We sinne against God because we loue him not as we should: if we loue him not, we are inexcusable.



VER. 168. I haue kept thy testimonies and thy precepts: for all my waies are before thee.

Hypocrisie and dissimulation farre from men who are truely godly.

Ambrose.

They lay open their cogitations and affections to God.

The wicked cannot hide from God, yet will it be laid to their charge.



HIs former purpose is yet further amplified; that he dealt not with God as a dissembler, or an hypocrite; but truely and sincerely he laide open his heart to God, and made his wayes manifest vnto him: as hee protests elsewhere, That he had not at any time spoken to God with his tongue, that which was not in his heart: there was not in him (*discolor mentis intentio, materialibus negotijs occupatu, quæ a proposito spiritu, alis executione deflectat*) when he spake vnto God, a diuided minde, busied with worldly matters, that might stay his spirituall intention, or turne it another way. *Beatus qui dicere possit, Omnes via mea ante te*; Blessed is he that may so say in sincerity, All my wayes are before thee; that will not suppose that he might hide his cogitations nor affections from the Lord. *Adam* hid his way from God, he concealed the iniquity of his bosome. *Caine* in like manner couered the slaughter of his brother, and dissembled it: this they did *in affectu, non in effectu*; in their affection, not in effect: for what can be hid from the Lords all-seeing eye? *Plena abscondentis perfidia, etsi apud deum nulla sit latebra*: their perfidie and falshood in seeking to hide from God, is not the lesse, that they are not able

to hide it: *Et si Deus omnia videt cordis occulta, bonum tamen est ut unusquisque animam suam ei aperiat, & expandat, & tanquam lumini vel calori eius occurrat.* Albeit the Lord see the secrets of our hearts, and nothing can be concealed from him; yet it were good for vs that we should offer them willingly to be scene: that we lay open our soules vnto him, occurring to his light and heate, not flying from him; that where we are good he may confirme vs, where wee are faulty hee may amend vs. The Lord worke it in vs.

TAV.



T A V.

VER. 169. *Let my complaint come before thee:
and giue mee vnderstanding, according to thy
Worde.*

Godly men in-
terrupt their
prayers against
their will.



Ee are now come to the last Section
of this Psalme: wherein we see *Da-
uid* more seruient in prayer then he
was in the first; as ye shall easily ob-
serue, by comparing them both together. The
godly, the longer they speake to God, are the
more seruient and earnest to speake to him; so
that vnlesse necessity compell them, they desire
neuer to intermit conference with him.

We should pray
for our prayers.
Basil.

Prayers directed
afore plague.

Many prayers hath hee made to God in this
Psalme: now in the end he prayes for his prayers,
that the Lord would let them come before him.
Some men send out praers, but God turns them
into sinne, and puts them away backe from him:
therefore *Dauid* seeks fauour to his prayers. Let
vs take heed vnto this: sith we liue onely by Gods
liberality, and haue not till he giue, and he cannot
giue till wee seeke; in what a miserable case are
we, if our prayers, whereby wee seeke from him,
be

be not receiued of him? Let vs abhorre euery thing that may procure this. *Peccato graneſcit oratio, & longè fit à Deo*: by ſinne prayer is made heauie, that it cannot aſcend vnto God. *Volare facit orationem bona vita, & dat alas precibus*: but a good life giues winges vnto prayer, and makes it flie vpward toward God.

Three ſortes of complaints are made by the godly vnto the Lorde: ſometime they complaine vpon their inuiſible enemies, Satan with his Principalities, Powers, and ſpirituall wickedneſſe. Theſe moſt properly are tearmed *Soules oppreſſors*. Sometime vpon their viſible enemies, wicked men: of whom eyther they ſuffer great wrongs, and iniuries; or then they cannot get right and iuſtice at their hands. Againſt theſe they runne to the Lord, appeale to his Tribunall, and hee receiues their clamours, griefes and wrongs into his boſome. And ſometime they complaine vpon themſelues: eyther for want of grace, which ſaine they would haue; or elſe, for abundance of euil, which ſaine they would want: as we ſee in the Apoſtle; Miſerable man, who will deliuer me from this body of ſinne? *Dauid* here tels not what his complaint was: but vnto one of theſe three it may be referred.

Giue me vnderſtanding according to thy Word.]
Hee ſeekes vnderſtanding, not ſimply; for the wiſedome of the fleſh is death: and the children of this world are wiſer in their owne generation then

Ambroſe.

Three ſorts of complaint made by the godly.

1. Againſt inuiſible enemies.

2. Againſt viſible.

3. Againſt themſelues.

Rom. 7.

No wiſedome in man without the word.

Jerem.

Gifts of nature
& grace, where-
in different.

then the children of light. But he seekes vnderstanding according to Gods word: without this the wit of man is foolishnes; and the more subtile he seemes to be in his wayes, the more deeply involves he himselfe in the snare of the Diuell. *They haue reiected thy word, and what wisdom can be in them?*

But sith he was an excellent Prophet, and protested before, hee had more vnderstanding then the auncient; yea, then his Teachers: how is it that still he prayes for vnderstanding? There is a great difference betwene the gifts of nature and grace. Nature oft-times giues to men very excellent gifts, as rare memory, knowledge, quicke wit, strength, externall beaurty: but therewithall it teacheth not man to consider his wants; whereof it cometh to passe, that he waxeth proude of that which he hath. This is a common thing to men in the state of nature, that of small gifts they conceiue a great pride: but grace, as it giues vnto man more excellent gifts then nature can afford; so it teacheth him to looke vnto that which he wants, that he be not puffed vp by considering that which he hath: but, forgetting it, is carried in all humility of his heart, to pray for that which he wants.

VER. 170. *Let my supplication come before thee;
and deliuer me, according to thy promise.*

WE should marke the graces, wherewith *Dauid* seasons all his prayers; that our prayer beeing like vnto his, wee may finde fauour with God as he did. First, his prayer flowed from faith, and was grounded vpon Gods promises. If any man pray, saith Saint *James*, *Let him aske in faith*: otherwise, his motions and words, are but like the rauing and instable waues of the sea. Next, hee prayed with feruencie; as his frequent repetition declares. *The praier of a righteous man auailes much, if it be feruent.* Thirdly, he praied with humble acknowledgement of his owne vnrighteousnes and vnworthines; esteeming it a great fauour, if the Lord let his supplication come before him: and last, hee concludes them with some solemn promise of thankfulness: these make our prayers fauorie and sweet-smelling to the Lord our God.

That wee may the more earnestlie bee stirred vp vnto this dutie; let vs consider how by this grace of prayer, a man vpon earth, is made a great courtier with God in heauen. They are much esteemed vpon earth, who haue access to the cares of Kings when they like: but this is a farre greater benefit; That if we will, wee may by prayer haue access to the king of Kings, to request both for our selues and for others also.

Bb

The

Praier should
be seasoned
with faith.

James 1

Feruencie.

James 5
Humility.

Prayer makes
man on earth
a great Courtier
with God
in heauen.

To pray and
not preuaile is
Moabs curse.

The contrary euill is a fearefull curse ; when God turnes the prayer of a man into sinne : *Hee prayeth with Moab and preuailes not.* How comfortlesse and confused, was the estate of miserable *Saul*, who in his neede prayed to God, and got no answeere? We shewed before what are the euils which debarre a man from this comfort: onelic now, let those that seeke mercy from God, beware they deny not mercy to others, when they seeke it, and they may shew it. See wee not how that rich glutton, who shewed no mercy to *Lazarus*, got no mercy himselfe? what then shall becom of those who are robbers, and oppressors of others? If he was reiected, *qui non dedit sua*, Who gaue not his owne ; what shall become of them, *qui rapiunt aliena*, who robbe from other men that which is theirs? *With what measure yee mete vnto others; with that same shall it bee measured to you againe.*

VER. 171. *My lippes shall speake praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.*

Praiers should
bee seconded
with promises,
and promises
with perform-
ances.

AFTER his petitions, he subioynes promises of thankfulnessse. There are some who seeke from God, but offer no promise; or if they promise, they performe not: these are louers of themselues, not of God. So their necessities bee fulfilled, they care not what be-
come

come of his glory : and therefore either they seeke and get not; or if they get, it is not for their good : for what good can be to them, who seek that they may haue to satisfie their own lusts, and not how to doe seruice to their God? Let vs second our praier with promises, & promises with performance, if we would haue them effectuell.

David was a man of honour, preferred to the Kingdome of *Israel*: yet he was not onely an example to others; but a ringleader also: for so he protests, that he ledde the people in great multitudes to the house of God, with such ioyfull affection, as if he had beene going to a feast. They who haue receiued most from God, are most bound to honour him: but now it is farre otherwise. For great men, for the most part, thinke it not seemely for them to open their mouth and praise God: they giue that seruice ouer to cōmon people; and therefore many a time God turnes their honor into shame: for he hath said, *I wil honour them that honour me; and by the contrary.*

There are some giue their lippes to the Lord, and not their heart. *Cursed be the man, that hath a male in his flock, and vowes and sacrifices a corrupt thing to the Lord.* Others, notwithstanding they can reade and sing, will not doe so much as with the mouth praise the Lord: but good *David* sometime stirres vp his soule to praise God; sometime encourages his tongue; yea, cals vp-on all that is within him to praise the Lorde.

Bb2

And

They who goe before the people in honour, should goe before them also in good example.

Both soule and body and all that we haue receiued from God, should be returned to him.



And is it not good reason, that all which we haue receiued from the Lord, should be imployed to serue him? *Nam et oculos, et os, et auditum propterea posuit in nobis deus, vt omnia ipsi membra seruirent; et qua ipsius sunt, audiremus; qua ipsius, loqueremur.* For this cause hath the Lord our G O D giuen vs both a mouth, and eyes, and eares, That all of them should serue him; that vvith our eares wee should heare his words; and vvith our mouth wee should speake his praises; and vvith our eyes we should beholde his glorious vvorks.

V E R. 172. My tongue shall intreate of thy word: for all thy commandements are righteous.

Christians are
Prophets and
should edifie
one another.

THe other duty of thankfulness promised by *Dauid*, is, To intreat of Gods vvords, for the edification of others. Euerie Christian man, as he is a priest to offer sacrifice vnto God: so is hee a prophet to teach his brethren; for vnto vs all stands that commandment, *Edifie one another in the most holy faith.* But alas, yee shall see many Christians now, who at their Tables, and in their Companies, can speak liberally of any subiect; onely for spirituall matters, which concerne the soule, there they are dumbe, and cannot say vvith *Dauid*, *My tongue shall intreate of thy word.*

For

For al thy commandements are righteous] The reason why among men, hee will increate of the word of God, Because they are all righteous; and so most forcible to reform the vnrighteousnes of men. *Non possunt homines reduci ad vitam reformationem, nisi per verbum tuum:* there can be nothing among men, but confusion in manners, corruption in religion, where the word of God is not reuerenced as a rule, to the which the actions of men should be squared.

The word of God keeps religion and order among men.

VER. 173. *Let thine hand helpe mee: for I haue chosen thy precepts.*

David, having made promises of thankfulness, seeks now help from God, that hee may performe them. Our sufficiency is not of our selues; but of his furniture: to will and to doe, are of him. In temporall things, men oftentimes take great paines, with small profit: first, because they seeke not to make their conscience good; next, because they craue not the helpe of Gods hand: therefore they speede no better then *Peter*, who fished all night and got nothing, till he cast in his net in the name of the Lord.

No successe in temporall things without Gods helping hand.

But in spirituall things, wee may farre lesse looke to prosper, if wee call not for the Lord his helping hand: the meanes will not profit vs, vnlesse Gods blessing accompany them, and his

In spirituall exercises much more labour is lost, if the grace of God help not.

Ier. 8. 23



hand-worke with them. *Paul* may plant, *Apollo* may water; but God must giue the increase. The Law was giuen by *Moses*: grace comes by *Iesus Christ*. This is the cause why in this age few grow in grace, notwithstanding they haue the meanes of grace in most plentiful manner; because the hand of God is not sought to worke with the meanes. There is preaching, but for the most part without profit; there is prayer, but it preuailes not; there is hearing of the word, but without edifying: *Balme* (enough) *in Gilead*, and there is *the Physitian also*, euen the great Physitian of our soules among vs: yet is not the health of people recovered; And all because in spirituall exercises, instant prayer is not made vnto God, that his hand may be with vs to helpe vs.

VER. 174. *I haue longed for thy saluation, O Lord: and thy law is my delight.*

The beginning
of saluation we
haue now, the
perfection we
looke for.

IN this verse is a twofolde protestation: first, of the great desire he had of Gods saluation; next, of his delight in the law of God. But how is this, he longed for saluation? was hee not euen now partaker of it? doth he not glorie, *Psal.* 27. that God was his light and saluation? Both are true; that hee had it, and yet he longed for it. We must distinguish betweene the beginnings, and the perfection of our saluation: the begin-
ning

ning we haue now by belicuing Gods promises; whereupon wee haue receiued the Earnest of his spirit: the perfection wee shall haue, when all his promises shall be fully accomplished vnto vs. Therefore S. Peter calls it a saluation, prepared to be shewed in the last time.

Wee see, then, the disposition of Gods children toward this saluation, to be such, that howsoeuer they haue comfort in the beginnings thereof, yet no contentment. This is expressed in holy scripture, by the words of seeking, waiting, sighing, panting, braying, hungering, thirsting, longing: by all which, a vehement desire of promised saluation is noted to them.

This condemnes both worldlings, who haue set the desire of their soul, vpon the perishing trash of the earth; counting that their treasure, which the spirituall man accounts to be but dounge: as also cold professors, who pretend an hope of eternall life; but long not for it. *Non desiderat patriam peregrinatio sine lacryma*; He that liues in his pilgrimage without teares, declares that he hath no desire of his country. *Non satis futura gaudia nosti, nisi renuat consolari anima tua donec veniant*; Thou knowest not well the ioyes to come, if thy soule loath not these that are present, and long for those that are promised. To such, terrible is that warning of our Lord; *Wee bee to you that are full, for ye shall hunger.*

And thy law is my delight. In this othe

Bb 4

restation

1. Peter 1

We haue comfort by the beginnings, but no contentment

Worldlings & cold professors reprobred, who long not for better then they haue.

Luke 6

The word to vs
in our pilgri-
mage, is like
Manna to Isra-
-ell in the wil-
d-tnes.

They who dis-
pise the word
need not look
for saluation.

If naturall life
may be loued,

testation, *Dauid* shewes what it was that vpheld him in this time of delay of Gods promised saluation; to weet, the comfort of Gods word: this is like Manna to *Israell* in the wilderness; which ceased so soone as they entred into *Canaan*, but sustained them in the iourney. So shall the exercises of the word cease, when we shall come to our heavenly *Canaan*: in the meantime, so long as wee are in the way, let vs comfort our selues with it.

Againe, wee see how *Dauid* alway conioynes these two; saluation, and the word of God. This is to be marked, for contemners of Gods word; who liue as if God were to saue them by miracles, and not by his owne ordinary meanes, appointed in his Church. They looke to bee saued, and yet will not reuerence the word: but they shall be deceiued.

VER. 175. *Lette my soule liue, and it shall praise thee; and thy iudgements shall helpe mee.*

Some expound this to bee a petition, for the prolongation of his naturall life; that he may liue and praise God. This I knowe is lawfull to seeke: and for it he prayeth, Psal. 90. *Oh spare a little, that I may recover my strength before I goe and be not.* But here I thinke *Dauid* stretches

stretches his affection toward that spirituall life, which now in Gods children is the beginning of life euerlasting; when the soule quickened by spirit of God, is able to walke with God. For as the bodily life is discerned by actions competent vnto it: so the spirituall life is knowne by actions competēt to it. Also where there is grace to pray, and thankgiuing with ioy, delighting in Gods word, and obedience giuen thereunto, these are vndoubted arguments of a spirituall life.

But it is a pitie, to see how many are liuing, concerning their bodies lusty and strong, who are but dead; carrying a dead soule, in a liuing body; strangers from the life of GOD, painted sepulchers, pleasant without, full of rottenness within; hauing a soule which can no more pray; nor praise the Lord, then a dead body, which can neither heare nor speake vnto men.

And it shall praise thee.] Much throughout this Psalm, and in all the rest, doth *Dauid* esteem of this exercise of praising GOD: sometime hee prayeth for it as a grace; sometime he promiseth it as a dutie; sometime hee practiseth it in himselfe, and sometime hee prouokes others vnto it. The Lord so parts the fruite of all his benefits, that he giues vs the profit, reseruing no more but the praise vnto himselfe: and the more praise we giue him, the more profit by new benefits reape we at his hands.

And thy iudgements shall helpe me.] How Gods word
is

How much more should eternall life be loued?

But many liue by the one, who are dead as concerning the other.

Fruit of all Gods benefits, is profit to vs, praise to himselfe.

is called his iudgement, See verse 7. 13. 20.
30. 39. 43. 52. 62. 66. 84. 102. 106. 108.
120.

VER. 176. *I haue gone astray like a lost sheepe;
seeke mee : for I doe not forget thy commande-
ments.*

Dauid persecu-
ted with ba-
nishment.

IN this conclusion of the Psalm, wee haue three things: a confession of sinne, a petition of mercy, and a protestation. The confession, *I haue wandred like a lost sheep*: *Euthymius & Vatablus*, vnderstand this to bee a complaint of his persecution he sustained of *Saul*; who like a rauening Wolfe of *Beniamins* tribe, chased *Dauid* like a poore sheepe, from his natie soyle; hunting him to and fro, like a Partridge, through the mountaines of *Israel*: and that therefore, leaning to the testimonie of his good conscience, he makes bolde with *G O D*, that hee would reduce him, and bring him home againe. And this exposition is also agreable to the Analogie of faith.

It is common
to all men to
wand're from
God.

Basil in Psal.
119.

But wee rather take this, with *Basil* and *Am- brose*, to be a petition for spiritual deliuerance frō his sinnes; wherein first, he premits a confession of his misery, that he had wandred from God. *Hoc et propheta post peccatum, & omni huma- na natura dicere conuenit*: and this not ouelie the

the Prophet, but the whole nature of man after the transgression, is bound to confesse. *Quod lapsus fateris, in eo tibi cum omnibus commune consortium est; quia nemo sine peccato: negare hoc sacrilegium est; solus enim deus sine peccato est: confiteri hoc deo impunitatis remedium est:* that thou confessest thy sin, in this thou hast a common fellowship with all mankind: there is no man without sinne; that is Gods prerogative: to deny this, is sacrilege: to confesse it, is the waie to impunity. *Dic itaque et tu iniquitates tuas, ut iustificeris:* Confesse thou therefore thy sins, that thou maist be justified. It is the presumptuous voyce of Antichrist, That a man in this life can be without sinne, and fulfill the law in perfection.

If their eyes were opened to see either the Lord, or themselves, they would be farre from this abominable presumption. When holy *Esay* saw a vision of the Maiestie of God, he cryed out; *Woe is me, I am uncleane.* When patient *Iob* had seene the Lord, it was his voyce, *Now I have seene the Lord, therefore I abhorre my selfe.* And *Dauid* heere by his deepe meditations of Gods word, is moued to acknowledge his great disproportion from it, by reason of his sinnes. As the small mores of the ayre, *Atomi*, are onely scene where the sunne shineth: so the manifold imperfectiōs of our nature, are best scene, where the light of Gods word shines most cleerely. And therefore to all such

presump-

Ambrose,
Psal. 119.



Such as thinke
themselves
without sin are
but blinde.
Esay 6

An answer to
presumptuous
Papists, boast-
ing of perfecti-
on.

Bern.



Confession of
sin profitable.

Amb. de penit.
lib. 2. c. 6

Gregor. moral. 22

presumptuous papists, as boast with the Pharisee of their perfection; and fall not down with the penitent Publican, and humble *David*, to make confession of their sinnes; wee returne that answer of *Bernard*, *Si te videres tibi displiceres, & mihi placeres*: If thou saw thy selfe, thou wouldst be displeased with thy selfe, & shouldst please me. *Sed quia te non vides, tibi places, & mihi displices*: but because thou seest not thy selfe, thou pleasest thy selfe, and displeasest mee. *Veniet autem dies quando nec tibi nec mihi placebis: non mihi quia peccasti, nec tibi quia in aeternum ardebis*. But the day will come, wherein thou shalt neither please thy selfe nor mee: thou shalt not please mee, because thou hast sinned against mee; neither shalt thou please thy selfe, because thou shalt be punished with euerlasting fire.

In any spirituall disease, the knowledge of our sinne and confession of it, is the first token of the returne of health. *Soluit criminum nexus verenda confessio peccatorum*: the bands of sinne are loosed when they are confessed. And againe, *Erroris medicina est confessio*, Medicine for error is confession: But to this purpose, notable is the saying of *Gregory*, *Mirantur quicunque volent in quolibet castitatis continentiam; mirantur viscera pietatis: ego non minus admiror in eo confessionem humilissimam peccatorum*. Let men admire as they please, in others, either their continency, or commiseration: I will much more admire

mire in a man to see the humble confelsion of his finnes. *Scio enim, per infirmitatis verecundiam, granioris esse certaminis praterita peccata proderere, quam non admissa vitare.* For I knowe, through the infirmitie of shame, that the godly haue a greater battel to confesse sinne committed, than to repress it that it be not committed.

Secke mee.] The second thing in the verse is, petition of mercy, after the confelsion of sinne; I haue wandred like a lost sheepe: but thou who art the great pastor of thy sheepe, who causdest ioie in heauen, at the conuersion of a sinner; thou that leauest ninetie and nine feeding in the mountaines, to seeke one of thy sheepe that hath wandred from thee; Come thou Lord, and by thy grace, bring me home againe. *Quare me, quia te requiro.* Seeke mee, for by thy grace I seeke thee: *Potes inuenire quem tu requiris,* Thou maist finde him whom thou seekest. *Dignare suscipere quem inuenieris,* Vouchsafe to receiue him whom thou hast found: *Impone humeris quem suscepis,* And lay him vpon thy shoulders, whom thou hast receiued. *Non est tibi pius onus fastidio,* It is no wearisome burden to thee, to beare thine owne, and bring them home againe vnto thy selfe.

Thus we see, how not onely in our first conuersion, God did communicate life to vs when wee were dead; as he followed Apostate Adam, that ranne away from him, and brought him again: but in all the course of our life, he is the conseruer

God the great
shepherd of
his people.

Ambros.

His fauour to-
ward his wan-
dring sheepe.

The praise of
the beginning,
progresse, and
perfection of
our saluation is
dew to God
onely.

The godly neuer
so fall that
they lose all
grace.

Ambr.

The manifold
uses of Gods
word to the
godly.

seruer and restorer of life to our soules. No man can reckon the errors of his life. We should perish in the least of them, if the mercy of God did not watch ouer vs; to saue vs when we haue lost our selues; to reduce vs when we wander; to raise vs when we fall. So that the whole praise of the beginning, continuance, and consummation of our saluation, belongs to the Lord our GOD onely.

For I forget not thy commandements.] The third and last thing in the verse, is this protestation. Where if it be demanded, How do these agree with the former? He hath euen now said that he wandred like a lost sheep; & now he saith, that he forgets not the cōmandements of God: The answer is, The godly neuer so fall, but there remains in them some grace, *quasperm medicina reſeruat*, which reſerues a hope of medicine to cure them: so *Dauid* here, *Licet quadam mandatorum dei transgreſſus eſt, omnimodam tamen illorum obliuionem non admittit.* Albeit hee transgressed some of Gods commandements, yet hee fell not into any full obliuion of them.

And last, we see here, that as *Dauid* first got life to his soule by the word; so by it life was conserued vnto him: and if at any time hee fell, it was the word that wakened him, to turne againe to the Lord by repentance. When we are tempted vnto sinne, the word armes vs to resist it: when we are vvounded with sinne, the word lets vs see how

how to cure it. And as the crowing of the Cock wakened *Peter*, to mourne for the deniall of Christ: so the warning of the word, wakens vs to repent when we haue sinned.

Happy vvere we, if such affection vvere in vs toward the vvord of God, as here was in *Dauid*. So should we finde that manifolde comfort in it, which hee found, to the reioycing of his heart. If vve receiue it, vvhen vvec heare it, vvith a liuelie faith, *Fiet nobis quodcumque desideramus*, It shall be vnto vs, what euer we desire: if wee be in trouble, it shall be to vs a vvord of consolation; if we be in ioy, it shal augment our ioy: Certainly if vve knew it, we would be more delighted with it. It is the seede of our new birth; it is the foode that conserues an immortall life in vs; it is a preseruatiue against all euill; it is the restorative of our soules in all diseases; it is the staffe of our infirmities; it is our armour against our enemies; it is the light of our eyes; euen that day starre that shineth in darknes. If we walke in the light thereof, it shall leade vs to the bright-shining sunne of righteousness, Christ Iesus. To whom with the Father and the Holy-ghost, be praise, honor, and glory, for euer, *Amen*.

What comfort we should finde in it, if our affection toward it were like Dauids.

August.



FINIS.

A Prayer, commonlie vsed by
the Author, before his Euening
 Doctrineto the people.

O Lord prepare our hearts to seeke thee: and open thou thy mercifull eare to heare vs. Let the meditation of our heart, the words of our mouth, and the lifting vp of our hands, be vnto thee: an acceptable Euening sacrifice: and let thy blessing descend vpon vs thy people; that by the ministry of thy word & holy spirit, light may increase in our minde: by which wee may knowe thee & life in our hearts, by which we may liue vnto thee: that so long as wee are here, in this miserable absence from thee, we may continually be guided with thy grace; and in thy owne good time, receiued vp to thy glory, through Iesus Christ: to whom with thee and thy holy spirit, be praise and glory for euer.

Another.

Lord quicken vs, that we may call vpon thy holy name. Lord make vs wearie of our sinnes, that we may come to thee, and thou may refresh vs: powre thy spirit vpon vs, that we may hunger and thirst for thy righteousness and saluation; that thou according to thy promise may satisfie vs. Declare thy presence in mercie vpon vs, who heere wait for thy louing kindnes in the midst of thy Temple. Water thine inheritance with the dew of thy grace; that we may fasten our roots in Christ, and may growe vp in him in all holines, fruitfull in euery manner of good worke, which may be to thy glory, through Iesus Christ. To whom with thee and thy holie spirit, be praise, and honour, and glory for euer, Amen.



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